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A lost leader

By Kenneth O. Morgan

DAVID MARQUAND:
Ramsay MacDonald
303pp. Cope. £12.50.

The shades of Keir Hardie and of Ramsay MacDonald dominate the mythology of the British Labour Party. They were, of course, comrades-in-arms, fellow pioneers in the Second International and Labour's first years in Parliament. MacDonald wrote a moving introduction to the authorized biography of Hardie in 1921. Yet their legacies for their successors are totally different. They symbolize the twin poles of Labour's over-ambivalent attitude towards political power. Hardie's legacy is a positive one—a tradition of socialism as a pure and uncorrupted evangelic crusade, which unites Labour left and right in common devotion. MacDonald's memory is in total contrast—a parable of how a great working-class tribune succumbed to the pressures of a "bankers' ramp" and the insidious wiles of the "aristocratic" (literally so in the case of Lady Londonderry), to destroy the party which made him. If a Labour leader now in one breath sighs affectingly "If Keir Hardie were alive today", in the next he will declare "I will not be another Ramsay MacDonald".

No modern politician has suffered a more cataclysmic decline in his reputation than has MacDonald. None has been more traduced by contemporaries or despised by later commentators. The pioneering days before 1914 when MacDonald, just as much as Hardie, was an inspiration to the Labour movement, and far more creative in formulating its ideas; the period of courageous protest against the hysteria of the First World War; MacDonald's leadership in 1924 and 1929 in making Labour's working ranks an effective parliamentary force; the magnetic force of personality which could lead even Beatrice Webb to call him "the greatest artist of his time"—all these have been long forgotten.

The turning-point, of course, was the political and economic crisis of August 1931. Even more than the events of October 1922 for Lloyd George, those desperate days have blackened MacDonald's name for evermore. For the left since then, MacDonald is the very symbol of treachery and conspiracy. Hostile, even vicious, accounts of his career have swept the field, epitomized in *The Tragedy of Ramsay MacDonald* by L. MacNeill Weir (once his private secretary). Since 1945, memories of MacDonald's delinquencies have been constantly evoked to rally Labour normals and to ward off yearnings for coalition. Even in 1956 Sir Harold Wilson had to tread delicately when suggesting that MacDonald might have genuinely believed in 1931 that he was putting the interests of the country above those of party.

If the left have branded him as a traitor, the centre-right have dismissed him as a woolly-minded, somewhat pathetic incompetent. "Ramsack", "the boneless wonder", "a substitute for a leader" and similar abuse suggest a politician hopelessly out of his depth, confronted with economic collapse, with only an empty, out-of-date rhetoric to resist the terrifying pressures of a new century and a new world. Major academic historians, from Charles Mowat in 1955 to Robert Skidelsky in 1968, have reinforced the view of MacDonald as foremost of the "pigmies" and "second-class brains" who led Britain to its lowest point of depression and dishonour. If Keir Hardie, at least for his own supporters, will always remain one of the saints who from their labours rest, MacDonald is commander-in-chief of the publicans and sinners, his coffers overflowing with filthy pieces of silver at the current market rate.

Hitherto there has simply been no worthwhile study of all of MacDonald and his role in British political history. There have been a few revisionist studies of specific episodes, such as the discussion of the crisis of July-August 1931 by Ronald Bassett, himself a former National Labour man. There have been monographs on foreign policy

which have shed a much more positive light on MacDonald's ideas on disarmament and international reconciliation in the 1920s and early 1930s. But for his career as a whole there has been nothing, a silence informed by innuendo. It has been an astonishing void in historiography and our understanding of our own society.

David Marquand's massive new biography, however, does far more than simply fill a gap in academic Labour history. It is a magnificent contribution to historical literature. It is based securely on vast range of new, unpublished material, not only the MacDonald papers with their rich veins of private correspondence, diaries and personal notebooks, but also other manuscripts in the Public Record Office and in private archives. In addition, Marquand has made wide use of interview material from members of MacDonald's family and from his contemporaries. His book is beautifully and sensitively written. The nuances of MacDonald's strange, introverted personality and his brooding, self-pitying temper are etched with grace and subtlety. Above all, this biography benefits not only from precise historical scholarship but from the special insights into the political and parliamentary life which the author's years as an MP (also leftward by successive generations) have given him. The eager expectations of the past ten years have been richly fulfilled.

Judged by the very highest standards, the book is not perhaps a complete masterpiece of history, while admirably lucid, seems a shade less authoritative than what follows. It is surprising, for instance, that more use has not been made of the correspondence files of the Labour Representation Committee and the Labour Party in Transport House, which shed "so much light on MacDonald as party organizer (and on some of the more abrasive features of his personality). Equally, the years since 1931, particularly the period up to 1935, when he was still Prime Minister, are dealt with rather cursorily. Certainly we have David Wrench's splendid doctoral thesis on this period—which surely deserves a publisher. But, given that MacDonald, on Mr Marquand's own showing, was the dominant influence on British foreign policy at least down to mid-1934, and more in command of his government than was previously thought, to allot less than a hundred pages to scale.

But these are matters of minor emphasis only. As a whole, the book is never less than compelling. In particular, for the crucial years from 1914 to 1931, especially in its handling of the 1924 and 1929 Labour governments and of the details of the split in 1931, *Ramsay MacDonald* forms an outstanding contribution to knowledge and understanding of British politics. It may be ranked with Gash on Peel, Blake on Disraeli and Bullock on Bevin as one of the great political biographies of our time.

MacDonald's political outlook was shaped in the first years of the Labour alliance up to 1914. Second only to Hardie (like himself an illegitimate boy from a desperately poor Scottish household), he was its architect. Emerging from the cocoon of Lib-Lab in the early 1920s, he rose to be the first secretary of the Labour Party in 1900, to be member for Leicester in 1906, and to become chairman of the parliamentary Labour Party (and its first real leader) in 1911. His emergence was inseparable from Labour's rise from *fin de siècle* radicalism in Gladstone's last years to become virtually an estate of the realm. By the eve of the First World War, MacDonald's towering ascendancy was beyond question.

In the first place, he had been Labour's major strategist. He was the creator of the Progressive Alliance, that partnership of a (supposedly) strictly independent Labour Party with an increasingly radical Liberal Party, which dominated politics between the Boer War and the war of 1914. MacDonald it was who negotiated (without consulting any colleague save, somewhat casually, Hardie) the secret "entente" of the JRC and the Liberal whips in 1903. Without this, Labour could never have established a parliamentary foothold. Thereafter, MacDonald bent his energies to ensuring that the tactics of Labour and the Liberal Government were coordinated, even to the extent of backing the 1911 National Insurance Act which was based on the distinctly non-socialist idea of a poll-tax. In March, 1914, there were prospects of a still closer relationship when Lloyd George suggested a possible coalition with a place for MacDonald in Asquith's government. This trap was avoided, in part since the ILP retained a fierce belief in Labour's independence as the prerequisite for ultimate victory. Still, it could well be argued that by August, 1914, MacDonald had helped give Labour a creative national role within a wider progressive movement. It is hard

steered clear of the shoals of trade-union pressure-group sectionalism or industrial direct action. With Henderson's reorganization of the party machine to assist him MacDonald had ensured that Labour was poised to claim its inheritance.

Second, and complementary to this, MacDonald was Labour's leading political theorist. Hardie referred to him in 1911 as "the biggest intellectual asset of the movement". His writings, with their Darwinian jargon and romantic utopianism, may seem dated and imprecise today. In 1910 they struck just the right note and compared favourably with the theorizing of later Labour leaders. Labour's programme was projected as the inevitable outcome of an organic, evolutionary collectivism; yet it was also built on the basis of the older radicalism. "Socialism retains everything of value in Liberalism", wrote MacDonald.

The stress in all his writings and speeches, no doubt reflecting his years with the Fabians, was on the evolutionary, orderly, peaceful road to socialism. He rejected the class war doctrines of the Social Democratic Federation and the nationalist jingoism of Blatchford and Grayson. Peace and order at home went alongside peace and fraternalism overseas. All this chimed in with the mood of the politicized section of the working class in the pre-1914 period, and the more advanced of the "sturdy radicals" of the Dilke type as well. It was the mainspring of Labour's early growth, and was largely MacDonald's work.

This is described by Mr Marquand with much skill and insight. The involvement of MacDonald with the secular nonconformity of the Ethical Society and the Fellowship of the New Life, his contact with advanced men such as Hobson and Hobhouse in the Rainbow Circle are shrewdly assessed. As Mr Marquand puts it, "MacDonald 'lived on the margin of several worlds' in these years. The inspiration of his wife, Margaret Gladstone, his friendship with Asquith, MacDonald's views on women's suffrage and other issues, and the devastating effect upon him for the rest of his life of her early death in 1911, are also greatly illumined. The consequence was to lend a peculiar blend of toughness and vulnerability to his political style from that time on.

The outbreak of war transformed MacDonald's career. From a left-centrist progressive with close access to government circles, he suddenly became a rabid and ardent, the unquestioned leader of a new radical left. MacDonald loathed war and violence; they were a plague, a pestilence, a crime. War was for him the product of sinister diplomacy and corrupt capitalist pressure. It was the failure of states to order progress. MacDonald spoke out fearlessly against the war, and Hardie (whom the war killed), he suffered for it, as did his children.

He lost his seat at Leicester in the 1918 "coupon" election, and was almost hounded out of public life. On the other hand, it is highly significant that MacDonald's opposition to the war took the form not of pacifism, nor of the approach of the No-Conscription Fellowship which urged conscription to defy the law, but of collaboration with radical Liberals. The Union of Democratic Control, a body committed to open diplomacy, disarmament and a peace settlement, was founded in August 1914: it was the work of Liberals—Ponsonby, Trevelyan and that passionate Francophile, E. D. Morel, supported by Angell, Hobson and others.

Unlike most of his ILP associates, who attacked the war from a socialist, not a populist, standpoint, MacDonald joined the UDC at the outset. In war as in peace, he lived for the Progressive Alliance, now ranged in opposition to the jingoist advocates of the "knock-out blow". Like others on the left, MacDonald responded ecstatically to the Russian Revolution; he felt "a sort of spring over joy" had broken out, "all over Europe". Henderson, Snowden and others were no less passionately stirred. But MacDonald was soon

disillusioned. He saw the revolution as a socialist, not a populist, standpoint. MacDonald joined the UDC at the outset. In war as in peace, he lived for the Progressive Alliance, now ranged in opposition to the jingoist advocates of the "knock-out blow". Like others on the left, MacDonald responded ecstatically to the Russian Revolution; he felt "a sort of spring over joy" had broken out, "all over Europe". Henderson, Snowden and others were no less passionately stirred. But MacDonald was soon

R. S. Thomas

alert to the need to restrain the revolutionary impulses of the new Bolshevik regime lest a new and more oppressive despotism rise from the ashes of Tsardom. When peace came, he bent his efforts to keeping the ILP away from the clutches of the communists and to pursuing the Second International away from the Third, an offshoot of the Comintern.

In effect, as a founder-member of the UDC he was already measuring his distance from the militant ILP rank and file, still more from the "direct action" wing of the Triple Alliance. (There is material on this, not used by Mr Marquand, in MacDonald's letters to Oswald Garrison Villard, editor of the New York *Nation*, deposited in the Houghton Library, Harvard.) Nevertheless, as disillusion set in with the coalition in 1921-22 and unemployment mounted, MacDonald stood out as the leader of a new kind of broad-based left. More than any other man in public life, he symbolized peace and internationalism, decency and radical reform. He made his audiences, in Molly Hamilton's words, "hear the dark rush of the wings of the Angel of Death as they fanned the hot, memented faces of the wounded". He seemed a man reborn in the cauldron of war, unmuzzled by the Lib-Labbery of pre-1914. When he was elected to Parliament for Aberavon in 1922, he was the natural choice as leader of Labour, the voice of the left, of the ILP, of conscience, of the suffering millions still in vain pursuit of a promised land fit for heroes.

From 1922 onwards, as Mr Marquand rightly argues, MacDonald was the dominant personality in British politics. His socialism had never seemed more undiluted, indeed, he gave it fresh emphasis in his prolonged and highly successful campaign to crush the Liberals as rival claimants for the leadership of the left. He provided an inspiring and charismatic premier for Labour's otherwise unremarkable first administration in 1924. A personal isolation—"the mystery man", Beatrice Webb called him at the time—underlined his ascendancy. In many ways it was an unhappy arrangement, dependent on unbridgeable divisions between MacDonald, Snowden and Henderson. It fell through the incompetent handling of the Campbell case by MacDonald himself (though, as Mr Marquand shows, others must take their share of the blame, including Attorney General Hastings and even Tom Jones, deputy secretary of the Cabinet). Still, MacDonald's reputation was much enhanced.

In particular, the priority given to foreign affairs gave him new authority, especially as he took on the Foreign Secretaryship as well. The Geneva Protocol, however flimsy it later appeared, seemed to herald a new era in Anglo-French relations; the French withdrew from the Ruhr; the Dawes plan cleared up much of the difficulties over reparations; and there was trade "twenty years' peace" as far as Labour argued that the key to economic recovery lay in a new kind of foreign policy and in finding new and stable markets for the exports of British staple industries. MacDonald seemed more plausible at grounds of efficiency as well as of morality.

MacDonald also came well out of the General Strike. He kept his distance from the advocates of industrial action, but led the attack on the Baldwin government's reprisals on the "trade unionists" and his good offices in partnership with Churchill to try to bring the miners' strike to an end. By 1927-28 MacDonald had achieved a dominance over his party matched by none of his successors as Labour leader. He showed intellectual vitality as well. He listened sympathetically to the "Living Wage" schemes of Hobson and the ILP, and to Mosley's monetary proposals. He punctured the more inflated claims of Lloyd George and Keynes in the "Yellow" and "Orange" books. As Labour prospered in the late 1920s, so did its leader. He took office as premier for the second time in June, 1929, with high hopes. As Egon Wertheimer had written shortly before, "he was the focus for the mute hopes of a whole class."

The expectations of this second Labour government were destroyed soon enough: this is a familiar theme which Robert Skidelsky above all has done much to illuminate. What is less familiar is that MacDonald was more imaginative than has usually been supposed in summoning up new ideas and strategies to combat the slump. The Economic Advisory Council (including professional economists such as Keynes) was his creation. When confronted by prolonged unemployment, by a massive budgetary deficit and finally by a disastrous run on the pound, the government dithered helplessly, but so did everyone else. Mr Marquand convincingly argues that the line between "economic radicals" and "economic conservatives" is a most imprecise one. Keynes himself spoke with several voices, even about going off gold. Mosley's schemes for currency management certainly offered a theoretical alternative to traditional economics, and MacDonald was far from dogmatic about them. But Snowden shot them down in Cabinet, and Mosley's egoism led him to premature resignation and the political wilderness. All the main remedies for depression were debated at length and rejected in turn. Public works proposals, notably for road con-

struction, were turned down when the Ministry of Transport officials proved their superficiality. Import quotas conflicted with the deep-held free-trade convictions of Snowden, Henderson and William Graham, as did the idea of a revenue tariff.

One of Mr Marquand's most interesting revelations is how agriculture, and the wheat import quotas and control boards proposed by the energetic Minister, Dr Christopher Addison, became a major battleground for the re-casting of the government's economic programmes. By the early summer of 1931, no consistent line of policy had been agreed by the Cabinet at all; the budget deficit widened and the debt quotas lengthened, in an alarming extent. And yet, despite all the internal bitterness within the government and MacDonald's frequent bouts of despair (on unemployment he wrote, "I have lifted my feet up to my lips and found it empty"), the administration was not without hope. There were achievements in foreign affairs—the London naval agreement, the French withdrawal from the Rhineland, further modification of the French demands for German reparations.

Implicitly, Mr Marquand rejects the argument of David Carden that MacDonald versus Henderson that the foreign policy of the enlightened internationalist Henderson was thwarted by the narrow insular nationalism of MacDonald. The Round Table conference in India was certainly no failure. Above all, the fiscal irresponsibility of his last Cabinet colleagues. He remained Prime Minister for almost four more years, isolated and unhappy;

Snowden's land duties, the Labour government seemed near in June 1931 to much firmer arrangement with the Liberals in Parliament. Lloyd George might even enter the Cabinet. The Progressive Alliance of pre-war years might be generated anew.

The outcome, of course, was a coalition of a totally different kind: the National Government was formed under MacDonald's leadership on August 24, 1931. After the run on the pound since mid-July and the shattering cuts of £97m proposed by the May committee, MacDonald seems in retrospect to have been left with little alternative, especially since his Cabinet was so hopelessly divided. Was this the case? Ever since Webb's famous article in 1932, the air has been thick with rumours of a conspiracy, with the King, Sanjiv, Baldwin and others involved. Mr Marquand carefully traces the underlying sentiment in favour of the emergency government back to the autumn of 1930. In a curious conversation with Baldwin on December 3, MacDonald raised the idea directly. "Baldwin said that it was impossible & I agreed", was the Prime Minister's lame comment. There is perhaps more to be said than Mr Marquand allows about the affinity between the two party leaders over many years. Writing to Oswald Garrison Villard on June 4, 1923, MacDonald had written of Baldwin in the following terms:

I know him very well—in fact we are close personal friends. He is a Conservative but an enlightened one. On foreign politics, his own personal views are, as near as matters, the same as mine. Really a good type of cultured liberal Conservative.

Even so, Mr Marquand demonstrates utterly convincingly that there was no decisive commitment to coalition in MacDonald's mind until his government submitted its resignation on August 23. That very evening (as is confirmed by important source material from his son, Malcolm, and his daughter, Isabel), he will asserted that would lead his divided party out into opposition. Several factors may have finally turned the scales. The unbridgeable divisions in Labour's ranks over the proposed cuts in unemployment benefits; the refusal of the TUC to endorse any meaningful cuts at all; a second visit to the King which brought a powerful personal appeal to MacDonald's patriotism; the urging of evilly-mannered that MacDonald's leadership was vital to ensure foreign confidence in any new administration—all these undoubtedly played their part.

But the decisive factor surely flowed from MacDonald's basic outlook as it had emerged throughout his career. He was never a rigid party man in a supreme crisis, as he was in 1931. On domestic issues, he was usually a consensus politician; certainly, he totally rejected the class and sectional view propounded by Henderson and the TUC. He was always deeply committed to the liberal orthodoxy of free-trade, cohesion and evolutionary change. It was this which led him into the minority camp of the anti-war radicals. In 1931, much more characteristically, they led him to uphold "the national interest" against "the Labour interest", with only Thomas and Snowden as major allies from his own party. A different kind of leader would have interpreted the options differently. Given MacDonald's past, as Mr Marquand shows, it is difficult to see what other course he could have contemplated other than obeying the King's request to form an all-party administration. It was the supreme sacrifice and the supreme tragedy of his career. It was a question of life or death, and the consequences to himself, wrote his son, Malcolm.

The last phase of MacDonald's life is usually treated as a painful anticlimax. It began with the decision to go off gold in September, quite at variance with the policies which dictated the formation of the National Government a month earlier. This followed the unhappy episode of the "doctors' mandate" general election in which Labour was crushed apparently beyond revival. MacDonald himself notably added to the bitterness of the campaign by brandishing "worthless German marks as symbols of the fiscal irresponsibility of his last Cabinet colleagues. He remained Prime Minister for almost four more years, isolated and unhappy;

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It was "nae his ain hoose". Yet his role is still worth examination. He played a major part in the successful outcome of the 1932 Ottawa conference which loosened a century of free trade. He was always something of a free-thinker in finance as in religion. He was the dominant figure in the Lausanne conference on reparations, and the main architect of British foreign policy until 1934. Some of the aspects of this period are worth pursuing further: for instance, how was MacDonald's long-standing faith in the beneficial influence of the Anglo-American alliance affected by the advent of Roosevelt and his immediate bluntness of the world currency stabilization at the London economic conference of 1933?

What does emerge is that MacDonald, like virtually everyone else, was quite out of his depth when confronted by Hitler. Rearmament was no policy for an old member of the U.K. who sat in the House of Commons in 1931. The 1935 defence white paper was a shattering defeat for MacDonald's influence on British foreign policy. By then, his role in the administration was becoming more and more unreal. He was worried by the government's drift to the right—"its appeal to the country is anti-Socialism"—and by the extreme feebleness of its National Labour wing. He was defeated on several issues in Cabinet, notably on the repeal of Labour's 1931 trade policy. He left Downing Street just after the King's jubilee, not before time.

The last stages were exceptionally painful and Mr Marquand is surely right to pass them by as rapidly as he can. There was MacDonald's humiliating defeat by Emanuel Shinwell at Seaham in the 1935 election, and his pathetic period thereafter as a University member. There was the (perhaps undeserved) disgrace of his one close friend, Jimmy Thomas, over a budget leak. All the time, vitriolic abuse came from his old associates in the Labour Party. It inflicted fresh wounds each time. Old and broken, he compared himself in his diary to a drowning man. "Sinks below surface & person becomes ragged & dimmer & is at last lost." He sank beneath the waves finally in November 1937. "Wonder had ended up the forgotten man of British politics."

Mr Marquand concludes this quite masterly and often deeply moving book by stressing that MacDonald's career should above all be viewed as a whole. There can be no doubt that he was right, and MacDonald as simply a noble idealist who lapsed unaccountably and finally in 1931 is utterly superficial. His failures after 1929 make sense only if related to the triumphs of the earlier years. The inspiration that he gave the Labour Movement before, during and after the First World War was based essentially on the premises of the Progressive Alliance. While his strategy after 1918 was directed towards wiping out the Liberals as political rivals, on the other hand his philosophy was still based on the imperative of the peaceful and evolutionary change of society, and on an almost Burkean respect for the past, not on the dialectic of class conflict. Even Lytton Strachey seemed distinctly Leonidistic. Socialism was relegated to an utterly distant future. This gradualist approach simply succeeded and, as this book shows, played a crucial part in making Labour not merely a party of protest but a party of government. After this biography, MacDonald will surely always be viewed as an outstanding and dominating democratic leader in the first three decades of this century, a spellbinding orator, a masterly tactician, a statesman of rare sense and energy, with just that touch of inspiration and magic to touch the souls as well as the minds of the mass electorate.

Even after August 1931, these qualities of greatness, in some ways of political genius, did not wholly disappear. MacDonald as portrayed here emerges as a truly big man, towering over the more pedestrian virtues of Henderson, the scarcely credible rigidity of Snowden, the timidity of most of his colleagues, as "emerge as one of the most dominating party leaders in our history."

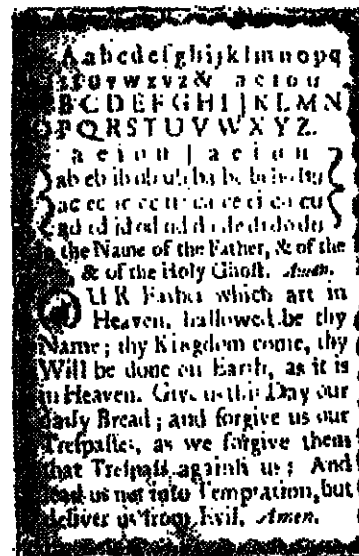
In addition, Mr Marquand also illuminates the nobler aspects of MacDonald's character: his personal loyalty to colleagues such as J. H. Thomas, his unswerving criticism of the kind of opportunist who would have sold out the cause of the poor, his devotion to his wife and children. The result is, for all Mr Marquand's genuine impartiality, inevitably to project MacDonald in a far more favourable light than has been fashionable in these past forty-five years. As Mr Marquand observes, previous authors have been so intent in focusing on the faults which flawed their subject's countenance that the face beneath has virtually disappeared from view. This can never be so again. A notable distinction and injustice in our historiography and folk tradition have been corrected once and for all.

And yet, the rehabilitation of Ramsay MacDonald can surely never be a complete one. It is true, as Mr Marquand says, that his ideas and ideals were out of date in the years after 1929. It is true also that his limitations, for instance his relative ignorance of economics, were equally present in all his Labour colleagues, virtually without exception. There is a fundamental sense, though, in which MacDonald's ideas always were out of date, or at least out of place for the leader of a party committed to sweeping social change, classlessness and the seizure of economic power.

MacDonald was always to some degree the Lib-Lab manqué who never wholly forswore the ethos of the Southampton Liberal Association. He was a conservative force even within the ILP, which after all was, in its fashion, committed to a class view of politics. As an ILP leader, Bruce Glasier, shrewdly noted in his diary in 1906, MacDonald lacked "the instinct of agitation". In this respect, Hardie and Maxton were closer to the essential dynamic of British socialism, of class view of politics. As a man in sympathy with it, more than he was in sympathy with these class alignments which resulted from the structural changes within the British capitalist economy between the 1890s and the 1920s, even assuming that he understood them. (Significantly, "nationalization" first appears in this book on page 423.)

MacDonald's isolation within the ILP, for all due to his severance from the party in 1927 was deeply painful for him, was later to be repeated within the Labour Party generally, even if his lonely eminence masked the fact for so long. It is in this context that his long-term isolation can be interpreted. It is central to an interpretation of MacDonald's career and his ultimate political failure. In a supreme crisis of capitalism, MacDonald felt instinctively alienated from the organized working class on which his party was based; he instinctively drew towards protecting Treasury orthodoxies at home and "foreign opinion" (that is, foreign bankers) abroad. The facts that the promises of a national government implied branding Labour as sectional and unpatriotic; that the National Government followed the deflationary, budgetary obsessions of the May report, which had scant bearing on the real crisis and which involved disproportionate sacrifices for the unemployed; that only the Conservatives could derive party benefit from the new alignment—these were swept aside in the cause of "the national interest".

From the best and most honourable of motives, MacDonald miscalculated, as perhaps inevitably he must. The essential ambiguity of his role as a social democratic leader was devastatingly laid bare. Here, perhaps, may be added his well-known acquaintance with wealthy society women. Perhaps too much has been made in the past of his friendship with Lady Londonderry, Cecily Gordon-Cumming, and Princess Bibesco, among others. Mr Marquand describes these with restraint and sensitivity; he rightly emphasizes MacDonald's desperate loneliness as an aging widower. He observes also that, like many Celtic, MacDonald could move into and out of the world of the rich as well. Nevertheless, it is hard to imagine anyone other than MacDonald as a leader of the Labour Party, or as a statesman, or as a man of letters. MacDonald, for all his great and noble qualities, lacked their kind of drive, commitment, perhaps ruthlessness. He inspired, he orated, he made a unique contribution to the political triumphs of the Labour Party. Even 1931, far from being to his discredit, yet to behold such a leader dominating such a party throughout a fundamental social and economic revolution is perhaps to say why, neither in 1931, nor in our time, ever, truly he, Ramsay MacDonald, was ever truly he, Ramsay MacDonald.



An early eighteenth-century hornbook in filigree silver case, and an illustration from one of the "Delightful Stories" series issued between 1804 and 1806; both are included in *Sotheby's sale of Children's Books, Comics and Juvenilia on March 3 and 4* (see also page 234).

The Napoleon of pacifism

By Malcolm Muggeridge

CAROLYN SCOTT:
Dick Sheppard
A Biography
253pp. Hodder and Stoughton, £4.95.

Carolyn Scott's fascinating biography of Dick Sheppard recalls a truly extraordinary man. His ministry at St Martin's-in-the-Fields from 1914 to 1926 became world famous: he was a pioneer in the use of what are now called "the media" for evangelistic purposes, and shortly before he died in 1937 founded the Peace Pledge Union, an ultra-pacifist movement which momentarily gathered a large and influential following. His character, as Miss Scott unravels it, was obviously much more complicated than he appeared at the time. His ostensibly brilliant success as a popular clergyman was belied by an inner sense of failure and frustration; he suffered acutely from ill health, in particular from asthma; his marriage broke up when his wife left him, in somewhat humiliating circumstances; for Archie MacDonald, author of *England and England*, a book which had a considerable vogue in its day.

One fact about him, disclosed by Miss Scott, that was previously unknown to me, and I should suppose, to many others who have felt the impact of his forceful, vivacious personality, I found very intriguing. It seems that Sheppard seriously believed himself to be a direct descendant of Napoleon Bonaparte, whose daughter by the wife of Marshal Marmon, begotten during Napoleon's exile on Elba, allegedly came to England, and in 1819 married Edgar Sheppard, a forerunner of Dick. What is more, he took great pride in this connection, even though, as a strong believer in the Germanic Mount as a guide to human conduct, and an out-and-out pacifist, Napoleon would seem to have represented everything he most abhorred: for instance, conscription, nationalism, wars of liberation, and many other of the most presidential features of our time. Someone really ought to make a study of the descendants from poor Rastin to Lenin, Stalin, Hitler, Mussolini and Churchill, not forgetting Lord Northcliffe, who chose his title because it enabled him to use the monogram "N". The Vicar of St Martin's-in-the-Fields, as a putative grandson many times removed, would have to be included.

Miss Scott quotes Sheppard's close friend, Harold Aronson, Master of the Temple, as considering that he had much in him that was descended from "his great ancestor". Not only had he that strange, uncanny power of being able to "sway great masses of men to do and believe anything that he wished, but he had also that capacity for high degrees of meticulous attention to detail, and a grasp of all the essential points of a complicated programme of business which is one of the marks of a great organiser.

Certainly, he was a man of strange contradictions. In many respects he had the soul of a Franciscan, but one with a taste for high living and fine clothes. He frequently railed against the inadequacies and hypocrisies of the established church ("How I'd love to come and smash Canterbury, and then rebuild it"), yet Archbishop Lang, whose secretary he had been as a young man, remained his adviser and patron, and when he left St Martin's, appointed him Dean of Canterbury, later facilitating his becoming a canon of St Paul's. Thought as strong a pacifist he had a decidedly bellicose temperament and found many of his fellow pacifists little to his taste. Neither his pacific aspirations, such as they were, nor his asthma precluded his smoking up to sixty cigarettes a day, and a remark quoted by Miss Scott suggests that he smoked more eagerly for the promise of sex involved in his two daughters than for intimations of grace. With all his warm friendships and high spirits, when he came to die at the relatively early age of fifty-seven he was desolate, sick and alone in his study in Amen Court.

Miss Scott offers no facile explanation of these deep contradictions, but is content just to record them, which she does with honesty and good sense. To someone like myself nearer to Sheppard in age—he was only twenty-three years my senior—he is perhaps more comprehensible. I see him as a notable example of a particular response in Christian terms to the First World War: a man, like Sheppard, who, like Studdert Kennedy ("Wopbino Willie") and "Tubby" Clayton, is a species of clericalism very much in evidence in the early 1920s, dubbed unknownly and unkindly, not altogether inappropriately by Hensley Henson, the Dean of Durham, "the shell-shocked chaplain". Sheppard, it is true, was invalided out of the army after very brief war service, but none the less the style of his ministry at St Martin's, the temper of his mind, his high expectations for the future and very much in the shell-shocked chaplain vein.

When I went to Cambridge in 1920 at the age of seventeen, ex-service ordinands of this type were still in evidence there, fellow undergraduates and younger men belonging to the generation than mine, wearing British Warm under their gowns with huge coloured scarves wound round their necks, often to reminisce about their battles and their wounds in a manner calculated to make a schoolboy gasp. Their talk, as I recall it at college and university discussions, was very like Sheppard's—all about how smug Christian worshippers must be pulverized into awareness of a new dynamic gospel; how concerned must be the poor and the oppressed ("You can't preach Christ to empty bellies", Sheppard

was fond of saying; alas, as the twentieth century has rolled on, such a condition would severely restrict even a pacifist's field of activity), and how a new, fierce but invigorating wind was blowing through the frosty pews of yesterday. Most of them in due course found a niche of one sort or another in the ecclesiastical establishment, and when they died left a faint trace in the abutment columns of *The Times*.

Sheppard's career, of course, was far more glamorous. Thousands queued to get into his services at St Martin's; millions heard his radio discourses; his books—*The Human Person* and *The Imputance of a Person*—were widely read, as were his articles in the *Daily Express*. He was a celebrity, in great demand as a speaker, much sought after socially. His Peace Pledge Union brought him into contact with eminent intellectuals like Aldous Huxley, Kingsley Martin, Bertrand Russell and Rose Macaulay; it also, incidentally, won him the approval of Dr Goebbels, as one of his diary entries indicates; the students of Glasgow University elected him their Rector with a considerable majority; he was elected to the House of Commons by the Labour Party in 1929. It seemed like success, yet it failed to satisfy. "Do you know," Sheppard said to a friend, "one of the loneliest things in the world is to be popular."

By universal consent there was some unique quality of loneliness and greatness in Sheppard, and forty years after his death, in the light of Miss Scott's biography, maybe this can best be seen in his refusal to be satisfied with the seemingly outstanding success, made possible by his own private despair which set him apart from all the others—the promoters of the Festival of Britain, contributors to the *New Chronicle*, League of Nations exiles; all the band of eager artificers of righteousness with whom he might otherwise be supposed to belong. Perhaps he would have been more at peace with himself and the world in a religious order. It would have spared him the sad adventure of his marriage, and surely procured him a sweeter and than in that inhospitable room in Amen Court two years before Hitler made a nonsense of his Peace Pledge Union, puncturing for ever all the coloured balloons which rose in love and loyalty in the sky in November 1938, when the guns in France at last were silenced.

Be that as it may, he stayed with the world, at times avidly. The last phase of his life was the most frenzied of all: rushing from place to place to address Peace Pledge Union meetings, fighting to get his breath between whites, and at night sucking down barbiturates for fraudulent sleep. Miss Scott dismisses the notion of suicide; while seeming by implication to counter it, she takes the difference between taking one's life and allowing it to be taken by one's doctor as a mere semantic quibble. (You can't preach Christ to empty bellies," Sheppard

Count me out

By Barbara Wright

EMILE AJAR:
Pseudo
213pp. Paris: Mercure de France, 37fr.

"Le cas Ajar" became headline news in France with the publication of Ajar's first book, *Gros-Cadın*, in 1904: a year later he refused the Prix Goncourt for his second, *La Vie devant soi*. Both books were almost unanimously praised by the critics, but most reviews began: "Who is Emile Ajar? The press, perhaps because it was thought such a mature and original writer could not possibly have sprung up without their knowledge and consent, variously attributed Ajar's books to Aragon, to Queneau, to Michel Cournot, to Roman Gary (who did turn out to be a distant cousin), or, worse, to syndicates of ghost writers, a publicity stunt by the publishers. The pseudonym Ajar was itself dismissed as being pseudo. Though at the same time some papers did a lot of detective work in France and abroad, and finally one, *Le Point*, tracked down the 'real' Ajar.

Pseudo, an one level, is the result of the author's finally agreeing to reveal at least some "facts" about himself. He writes it in the first person, as Paul Pavlovitch, one of the names he answers to in private life. He says that he is of Russian descent, his field of work during the Second World War, and now lives near Cahors, in the Lot. He describes, from the point of view of the quarry, the manhunt in the ecclesiastical establishment, and when they died left a faint trace in the abutment columns of *The Times*.

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images and non-sequiturs of Pseudo, he frighteningly illustrates the pressures exerted on "one-off" citizens in "free" societies. Paul Pavlovitch stands for those who by temperament or philosophy wish to live their own lives in their own way, "à l'envers et contre tous", in spite of schools of thought, in spite of fashions, psychological orthodoxies, news values. Pseudo is written in the same fresh, inimitable and unimitable style as Ajar's previous books: casual, fluent, graphic, and funny with a kind of Marx Brothers or *Holliday* poppin' cussiness. You have to have read *Gros-Cadın* and *La Vie devant soi* in order to savour Pseudo to the full—but these are books of the best and most moving to have come out of France in recent years. (A translation of *La Vie devant soi*, by Ralph Manheim, is to appear shortly.) The last words of Pseudo are: "Ceel est mon dernier livre." It would be a real loss if Ajar were to keep to this decision.

Jeepers bleepers

By Richard Usborne

BRIAN KILLICK:
The Camelot Club
216pp. Hamish Hamilton, £3.95.

Wasn't there something in the papers the other day about a member of a gaming club disappearing and some other member of the club writing, or feeding a journalist with facts for an article about the friends the levanter had left behind him, all saying "He went that way"—and pointing in different directions? Or was it about an MP leaving a pile of clothes on a bathing bench somewhere and going Missing Supposed Drowned? I forget the names, the facts, the whys, the wherefores and the woodwork. But bells started to ring, muted, peal, when I was reading this new novel by Brian Killick. I began to think it might be a roman à clef, and that anybody who is anybody . . . but never I . . . would recognize who is who in it.

Now, having finished the book, I doubt if I need feel excluded. The characters are cards: court cards perhaps, a lot of them, but paper-thin when stood sideways. They could be no threat to anybody in an identification parade.

But it's a strange club, the Camelot in Piccadilly, and I don't see why it is important enough to the story to be in the title. We never see its members gaming . . . perhaps a spot of backgammon when there isn't a gossip group yet in the bar. But gossip (getting the story into

arrival the detection begins and the novel, in a sense, ends. Having created a promising group of characters and sketched in some interesting relationships, Ngaio Marsh then stops any further development by turning her cast into suspects and thus freezing them solid. This is not a complaint one would make about most detective stories, but since Ngaio Marsh can craft people, it seems a pity not to allow them slightly more freedom. But the technique does, at least, solve the problem of Ricky's awkward passion for a married woman.

Hammond Innes's latest novel, *The Big Footprints* (349pp, Collins, £3.95), takes place in East Africa, the big footprints of the title are those made by the elephant herds as, savagely depleted by war and severe drought, they move north in a desperate effort to survive. Reminded of the African elephant's good solid yard, this is one of his best. It is narrated by Colin Tait, who, while working on a television documentary about African wildlife, becomes drawn into the conflict between Cornelius van Delzen, who is trying to save the elephants, and Alex Kirkby-Smith, who has set up a commercial operation for their destruction. Though the characters are less than convincing, real feeling makes his way through the author's prose in his descriptions of the African landscape and, above all, of the elephants.

Annals of the parish

By J. I. M. Stewart

NOEL BLAKISTON:
Collected Stories
332pp. Constable, £4.95.

The first of these stories begins "Caution James had the feeling that he was marking time", and in the opening paragraph of the last a small boy called Percy is setting out from the rectory to deliver parish magazines. "Sanguineux parolise maguins", he calls them, since one of his amusements is to carry on a dialogue with himself. In *Annals of the Parish* is found of surveying the varying scenes of clerical life, and his descriptions are unspectacular, closely observed, delicately chiseled, witty: annals of quiet people written for people liking quiet lives. Elsewhere in the book there is a good deal of cultivation

around—and again it sometimes declares itself right at the start. "Fourth Anniversary" invites us to consult a Dictionary of *Proverbs* and *Obsolete Words*. "Full Circle" begins, "Rather a fascinating book about the jeunesse of André Gide". In "Honeymoon" we are emerging from the castle of the Strozzi and there is trouble over confusing Mantegna and Montagna. But the culture is not boring. The restaurant in the story so entitled is called the Madame Bovary, and at the close of the first paragraph we read, "A mural at the end of the room depicted a four-wheeler with the blinds down, perambulating the streets of Rouen". Unless our memory of Flaubert is singularly defective, this is worth what Lord Chesterfield would have called an ill-bred audible laugh.

There are thirty-two stories in the collection and they take up just 320 pages of print. None of them is of the "long-short" kind, and some of them are all over in about 2,000 words. Mr Blakiston, in fact, has dedicated himself to one of the most difficult literary forms, and I do not think that he always succeeds with it. Some of the stories, brief as they are, seem longer than they ought to be; they wander over their patch of ground like anecdotes padded out. Others hint a weight of implication not adequately explored and read; our expectations have been quickened with considerable art but we are put on short commons at the end. But the great majority are, at the least, deft and pleasing.

In an introductory note Mr Blakiston speaks of his book as describing a world of which few vestiges remain. This is largely true, but cannot be regarded as to the disadvantage of his work. Some of the best of the stories, indeed, sketch a scene which only a few generations ago were likely to remember. "Honest-to-God" is an example. Major Newman, a squire, has for long neglected any public discharge of his religious duties.

He had quarrelled over a boundary fence with one vicar, and failed to resume church-going when a second arrived. This makes Mr Barlow's position with his rustic parishioners hopeless. "He was coxing a boat in which the stroke had failed to turn up. The other oarsmen would have rowed had there been a stroke, but in the circumstances they too had failed." Mr Barlow, in other words, has an empty church. But one day in a pub Major Newman hears somebody ask, "What are the Psalms?" and an ignorance so startling gives him serious thoughts on the state of England and English society.

On the following Sunday Mr Barlow, waiting to conduct evensong, has the discomfort of seeing a group of upper-class people get out of "a rich car" and make their way towards him as he stands in the church porch only to retreat hastily on discovering that the service is about to begin. "Sunday's a rotten day for seeing churches," he hears one of these connoisseurs of ecclesiastical architecture remark. But now to add behold!—the vicar himself has stepped up and become the service, getting through it very creditably although he has forgotten when to rise to his feet and when to kneel. Mr Barlow is overjoyed, since his standing in the village is thus transformed. He hastens to invite Mr Newman to become a churchwarden. But Major Newman, a man honest-to-God, has to confess that it has been a mistake. In repeating the Creed he had discovered he didn't believe a word of it.

In a sense the basis of this story has certainly passed away. There are still plenty of English rural communities in which the squire, economically regarded, is an all-powerful figure, and almost anything that he says, or his wife says, is law. But even if he prays and sings and reads lessons like mad, his sway stops mysteriously short of getting a single cottager into church.

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Sisterly sensibilities

By Valerie Shaw

ANTHIA ZEMAN:

Presumptuous Girls
Women and their world in the
solitary woman's novel
182pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
£5.25.

PATRICIA MEYER SPACKS:

The Female Imagination
A Literary and Psychological Investigation of Women's Writing
326pp. George Allen & Unwin.
£5.95.

MARY ALLEN:

The Necessary Blankness
Women in Major American Fiction of the Sixties
226pp. University of Illinois Press.
\$8.95.

None of these books aligns itself with feminist ideology; and although this might seem a recommending virtue in studies which deal with literature, it actually induces surprising nostalgia for the old days of outrageous but timely propaganda. The current fashion for moderation involves finding Kate Millet too angry, Virginia Woolf not angry enough, and looking to literature for refinement of consciousness already raised. The topic is still women, but the tone is mellow and useful now; predictably enough, this does not mean that it has anything new to tell us about literature—or indeed about women. Despite differences of scope and method, these three books confirm the uneasy feeling that *Women and the World* has become a non-subject.

Anthia Zeman's racy book, *Presumptuous Girls*, ranges widely within a mainly middle-class, Anglo-American, cultural setting, and it stands firmly on the belief that women use their artistic talents to express kinship with the sisterhood. The rationale for gathering a large number of nineteenth and twentieth-century novelists together is not historical or ideological, but simply an appreciation of the "serious woman's novel as a perfect way of telling women precisely where they stand at any given moment. Her ear to the ground for any legal or medical innovations, changes in social attitudes, population growth, or communications which could affect women's well-being, the woman novelist is not content here to grasp history intuitively, and acts promptly when the need arises:

A time came when steel mills and wheatfields had been induced to

grow high in the vastness of America, and had tossed up incidentally onto her East Coast a little society of wealth which, having neither court nor culture to guide it, was becoming an inauspicious place for a woman to lead her life. Edith Wharton, society hostess, took up her pen.

Cultural change and imaginative response are simultaneous in Mrs Zeman's semi-fictional account, and she enjoys the sensationalism of it all: evoking the growth of religious doubt in nineteenth-century England, she tells us, "Atheism was rife... the wind was blowing all over England... into the remotest hamlets; into the kitchen of Ilwaco where the three little girls and their brother drank it in with their non-ridge." Mrs Zeman's style bears out her assertion that women are not interested in historical or sociological change as such, but it certainly weakens her attack on the distortions promoted by the language of advertising and popular romantic fiction.

The problem of maintaining superiority to pulp romance is one of which Mrs Zeman shares with many contemporary novelists, particularly those who expose the miseries of newfound pleasures. Actually having the envied sexual freedom which was assumed to be men's dearest delight turns out to be quite different from enjoying it: liberated women like Isadora Wing in Erika's *Jon's Fear of Flying* readily melt into the dreamy attitudes usually associated with romantic thralldom. No sooner does Isadora, successful writer and idealist of the "ripless fuck," feel daisy Adrian Goodlove's arm round her waist than she is spinning a fantasy of marrying him. Haunted by Doris Lessing's character Martha Quest, who cannot have an orgasm unless she is in love, Isadora reaffirms the old-fashioned love-and-marriage equation.

Mrs Zeman might not reckon Erica Jong a serious novelist, but many of the novels she admires for their honesty and wise policies of adjustment are certainly not immune from the corny. There seems to be a huge gulf between the extremes of defiance and surrender, between, for example, fighting talk like "Integrity is the orgasm" (a pronouncement of another Doris Lessing character, and well on its way to becoming a *locus classicus* in studies of women in literature), and the passive dialogue from Margaret Drabble's *The Waterfall* which Mrs Zeman quotes to illustrate a union bound to be blessed by eros of all people for its acceptance of "risks, loneliness and

longing and selfishness... each other".

An important point is being touched on when Mrs Zeman highlights the continuing need to disentangle duties from rights, and she writes persuasively about contemporary novelists' attempts to evolve new moral codes, by no means an exclusively feminine concern. Yet so far these attempts have yielded few surprises in women's fiction, and the prospect of the novel returning to focus on the individual rather than the female seems distant. Mrs Zeman makes the customary pleas for women to take active, adult roles in public life, but, significantly, what she looks forward to the novel gaining from all this activity is not vitality but serenity.

In *The Female Imagination*, Patricia Spacks sets out to identify patterns of "a special female awareness" which persists despite social change and which "emerges through literature in every period", in the belief that once these patterns are found, literary critics will have to admit their usefulness. And find them she does, in a host of writers as diverse as Mrs. Thrale, Doris Lessing, Louisa Alcott, Beatrice Webb, Marie Bonaparte, among many others.

If Mrs Spacks has accurately described female creativity, then Chesterton's parody of Tennyson at his most sentimental might now run "Self-hatred, Self-effacement, Self-control/These three alone would make a woman write". The "Self" prefix is the crucial thing; women everywhere are seen struggling to explore and express it in its various compounds. Necessarily, Mrs Spacks includes herself in the tricky business of communicating the feelings of the individual, and she allows that the success of her book partly depends on what she calls "the implications of the special conjunctions achieved through a particular sensibility". Finding a method that both conveys and goes beyond the personal therefore becomes a matter of more than usual importance.

What Mrs Spacks does is to build a vast gallery filled with women's prose self-portraits. The unusual, even the bizarre, is well represented by items like the seventeenth-century autobiography of the Duchess of Newcastle, Margaret Anderson's memoirs, and *The States of Mary McLeary*, but since fiction is defined as a "concocted form of autobiography", not enough can be made of the artistic differences between these works and the many, more familiar, novels treated.

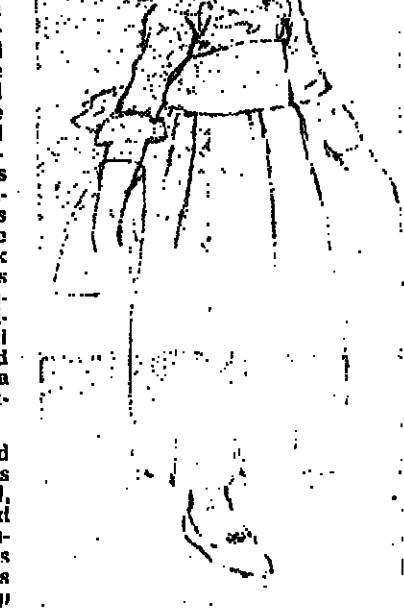
Mrs Spacks is concerned with sameness, and to emphasize it she intersperses literary discussions with non-literary material: inventory documentation of contemporary attitudes is provided by candid anecdote (Mrs Spacks recalls feeling that her "credentials as a good woman had been challenged" when a sceptical student asked her if being a successful career woman meant sending her daughter to school in dirty underwear); quotations from letters to the *Confidential Chat* section of *The Boston Globe*, and fragments from tape recordings of the Wellesley College colloquium from which this book grew. By these means can the "modern college woman's dilemma about how much to let her brains show when she is with a man" be made a continuation of Magale Sullivan's predicament, and Jane Austen's views about marriage related to a Yale wife's dependency.

With all this going on, it is often difficult to concentrate on the many interesting things Mrs Spacks has to say about individual texts and authors. More seriously, her pedagogic battle against reticence is hard to reconcile with the literary sensationalism she wants to make. The student who groaned "I come here to listen to other people's ideas, I don't want to tell you what I feel" may well have been lazy, but only in the modern context of a seminar on women writers and women's problems could the remark seem fraught with social stereotypes fulfilled, and "verbal giving" related. When, the assumption is that all behaviour is ultimately defensive, no one ever wins: the man who ventured into the class apparently avoided "self-exposure" by jabbering irrelevantly. At the

helping us to cope—us, women, typified by a Wellesley class, and lucky to be able to sit around talking about conflicts between love and work in the first place.

Mary Allen's *The Necessary Blankness*, a straightforward examination of women in the American novel of the 1960s, is, like *Presumptuous Girls*, presented from the caring woman's angle, but the shrewdness of the fictional images assembled offers few occasions for sentiment: Roth's manipulative monsters; Kesey's "ball-cutter"; Nurse Ratched, and Purdy's middle-aged grotesques are all here, along with the Updike woman, fresh from the shower, adorably steamy, pink-bottomed, and dumb. By moving on from these, first to Joyce Carol Oates's lower-class pragmatists, hardened into cynicism by brutal economic facts, and then to Sylvia Plath's sexually disintegrating personae, Mary Allen is able to bring out the many similarities between men and women writers. Differences lie more in sympathies than in perceptions, and Ms Allen demonstrates just how pervasive the idea of female blandness is in fiction.

This is all the more striking considering that the period chosen is the decade in which *Women's Liberation* really got going, and Ms Allen is the only one of these three studies to ask outright why it is that the "feminist cliché" of woman's many needs has not worked its way into literature, except negatively. She does not resolve her doubt whether this is simply a case of literature lagging behind cultural awareness, or whether in fact writers of the 1960s "saw a truth that will outlive current fads" about women. But she does point to one possible way out of stagnation. Contrasting Kate Millet's heavy-handedness with Germaine Greer's wit, she concludes that "in their failure to laugh, women do not reflect an awareness of anything sobering and profound". The humourlessness of women in fiction is a fairly recent phenomenon, but it is not confined to the novel as can be seen from the way writers on women and literature manage to make Jane Austen terribly unfunny. And no amount of praise for "mad housewife" novels and suburban black comedies can make up for that.

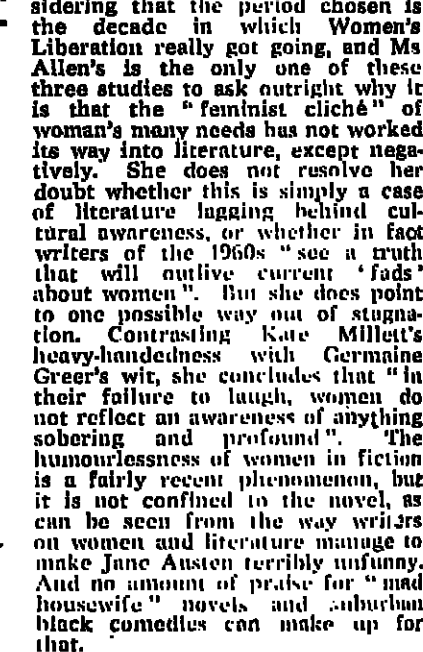


One of several drawings by Kate Greenaway from *Sotherby's sale of her work* (see also page 232), which includes a number of books illustrated by Greenaway, Crane, Caldecott and Rackham; first editions of *Beatrix Potter*, *Leah's Quest* by Laury Nonsense, and *Alice's Adventure in Wonderland*; *harmbooks*, *primers*, *documentary* *penmanship* and even *rims of Gam*, *Hospital* and *Mickey Mouse Weekly*.

jokes about marriage—all really expressing the need for Men's liberation, it goes without saying—cheerfully drive.

But it is in the chapter "The Artist as Woman" that the bleakest outlook emerges. Mrs Spacks has plenty of evidence to support her comparisons between the fantasizing adolescent and certain kinds of artist, and she deals very effectively with Isadora Duncan, filled with regret at the missed chance to be seduced by Rodin and so enrich Art and Life, and with Mary MacLane, choosing Napoleon and Satan as suitable phantom lovers and preserving much of herself as writer by not writing much. But for a positive example of writing which achieves artistic control, Mrs Spacks has to make a little Mary McCarthy go a long way, and make large claims for *Memories of a Catholic Girlhood*, Jane Austen, George Eliot, and Edith Wharton, who offer nothing so transparent as "self-deceptions as artists", cannot figure here. The single conclusion to which Mrs Spacks's groupings, and her concentration on sexual self-awareness, can lead, is the gloomy one that nothing succeeds for women artists like ambiguous triumph.

Mrs Spacks seems to believe that women will stop writing if ever they are deprived of a painful and angry need to affirm inner freedom in a threatening male environment. Meanwhile, women's writing is left occupying a rather cosy role of



This circle of approval could be the single most stubborn barrier to the step women's writing must take if it is to move at all. Reluctance to be judged impersonally by accomplishment; diffusion of imaginative energy into fantasies, and retreat from specialness into amorphous kinship, these are all features that recur in Patricia Spacks's characterization of the "female imagination", and it is telling that by far the strongest portrait she draws is of Isak Dinesen, transcending self-absorption through action, and using words to express "loving but unsentimental" attention to the quixotic world.

Presumptuous Girls, *The Female Imagination*, and *The Necessary Blankness* all note the rarity of heroines with professions that mean anything to them, and agree that something should be done about it. It is not their purpose to say what, exactly; but it is safe to predict that women will not rest content with communication among themselves if they manage to break the tradition of mutual protection (upheld, explicitly or indirectly, by these studies) and finally disassociate judgment of the product from understanding of the producer's personality and problems. Meanwhile, to this woman writing a review of books by women about books by women about women, that circle of recognition looks as stifling a myth as any yet made by men.

Diplomacy among the derricks

By J. B. Kelly

MARIAN KENT:

Oil and Empire
British Policy and Mesopotamian Oil, 1900-1920
273pp. Macmillan/London School of Economics. £10.

Perhaps the most striking feature of all the brouhaha occasioned by the activities of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries over the past three or four years has been the almost total absence of any serious public discussion in the West about the strategic aspects of crude oil production and supply. Indeed, there is little doubt that, in what has become a recurring sacred drama, have confined themselves strictly to the ritual positions and responses embodied in a threadbare litany of "recycled financial surpluses", "long-term contracts", "barter deals", "economic interdependence", and "the like". When and how in the past decade or so this indifference to strategic control over the principal sources of Western Europe's oil supply took root is not readily determinable, although the first signs of its coming into the consciousness of the British Foreign Office happily accepted the participation of the Deutsche Bank in the Turkish Petroleum Company, and it showed no compunction at all in negotiating directly with the German government as a means of pursuing its objective of "dishing" Royal Dutch-Shell in Mesopotamia. Little wonder that Dr Kent, normally so restrained in her comments, refers sharply to "the somewhat cynical approach of the Foreign Office to the whole Mesopotamian oil affair".

The Foreign Office was not merely cynical, it was also inept, notably in its handling of the central issues of Anglo-Persian's acquisition of the majority shareholding in Turkish Petroleum and the assertion of British control over the company as a whole. Moreover, in its treatment of the British directors of the National Bank of Turkey, without whose willingness to surrender their shareholding in the Turkish Petroleum Company the British policy of oil control could not have been effected, the Foreign Office was both cavalier and lacking in decent appreciation; while in contrast it was at once feeble and dictatorial in countering the German ascendancy at Constantinople. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the Foreign Office took its tone in this affair from the Foreign Secretary himself, Sir Edward Grey, who constantly bent over backwards to conciliate the Germans—as he was doing for much of the time to nearly everyone he had to deal with, thereby setting a style in anxious pliancy which was to be aped by too many British Foreign Secretaries in the sixty years since.

Here, too, in the disdain and distrust which the Foreign Office customarily exhibited towards Royal Dutch-Shell, regardless of the patent loyalty of its directors to British interests, can be detected the lineaments of those prime convictions which were to make the Foreign Office in years to come such an ineffective guardian of British oil interests in the Middle East.

War came in 1914 before the Turkish Petroleum Company had succeeded in negotiating an oil concession with the Imperial Turkish government. The war also invalidated the agreement reached in March, 1914, regarding the shareholding of the company. By the time the war ended the situation had altered radically. The Ottoman Empire was under British military occupation, the Germans were out of the running for an oil concession, and the Americans were jostling to take their place.

What was more, the war had revealed more sharply than before the extent of British dependence upon non-British sources of oil, reinforcing the British government's determination to bring substantial reserves of foreign oil under British control. These reserves, it was decided, lay in Persia and Iraq—spite of the fact that Persian oil

production in the war had been minimal in Britain's needs, and the existence of oilfields in Iraq was only conjectured. (Oil in commercial quantities was not to be discovered there until 1927.)

To exploit the potential reserves of Iraq on the scale required was beyond the resources of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. Like it or not, the British government could not come anywhere near to achieving its aim without the assistance of Royal Dutch-Shell, whose commercial strength far exceeded that of Anglo-Persian and, hitherto, the other major British company.

So discussions were set in train immediately after the war, both to decide the terms of Royal Dutch-Shell's participation in the exploitation of Iraqi oil and to alter the basis of its shareholding so as to establish British control over the company. The history of these negotiations, never before made public, makes sobering reading. So confused and serpentine were the tactics of the British ministers and officials involved that it is scarcely surprising that neither of the British governments in Mesopotamia had been guided by 1920 when Dr Kent's narrative comes to a close.

More success attended the negotiations which had been going on simultaneously with the French Government for the inclusion of the Mosul vilayet in the projected kingdom of Iraq, the mandate for which was to be acquired by Britain. A series of Anglo-French exchanges culminated in the San Remo understanding of April, 1920, which settled the mandates for Iraq and Syria and provided for French participation, as partial compensation for France's renunciation of her claim to Mosul, in the eventual exploitation of Iraqi oil. It also opened the way for the reconstitution of the Turkish Petroleum Company as the Iraq Petroleum Company, and for the grant to it in due course of a concession for Iraq.

An account of these developments, and of the further evolution of official British oil policy between the wars, is promised by Dr Kent in a subsequent volume. If one might venture to offer a suggestion, without any way appearing to be unappreciated by the Foreign Office, it is that she might consider allowing herself a little more rein in the future. Her style is very tight and disciplined, too much so in places, where it tends to the dry precision of the official and semi-official documents which are her raw material. So scrupulous is she in her attribution of sources that she has given her book a loping appearance: 88 pages of notes and appendices, 155 pages of text. She has no need to be so meticulous or restrained: her scholarship is faultless, her approach cool and incisive. We should all be the richer and wiser if she were more assertive, especially in her own opinions, suspicions and judgments.

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All's well that

All's well that ends well

The poems on Side 1 are drawn largely from *Selected Poems 1946-1968*. Mr Thomas's reading of these earlier poems draws attention to one quality easily overlooked in the printed text, his interest in sustaining the flow of the verse. One ear is caught by continuous curves over three or four lines, an effect

It ends well

A final question about this book must be, in view of its title: when does architecture cease to be his-

Mr Hilling comments rather surprisingly on Newport's civic centre that the building "can claim to be the last in a well-defined series stylistically evolved from John Nash's Palladian houses which, in the last half of the eighteenth century, were the last of the eighteenth-century paintings. Poussin and Claude Lorrain." There we his concluding words. No many would put Cecil Hawtrey high. Mr Hilling's loyalty to South Wales is obvious. He is not aware of resemblances that Newb would have been unlikely to recognize and, reverting to his implied belief that there is a quality of Welshness common to most of Welsh architecture, he has not been able to do not done him the injustice of overstating), one can only observe that as a work of architecture Newport's civic centre (if the expression is to be excused) is no more Welsh than any other. In fact, as it happens, rather less so.

most especially soldiers like Wilfred Owen and gracefully to the Welsh the Elstonded boys to their own come—possibly forward translation Parry's venerable and *Oxford Book of Welsh Verse 1862*? Watkins after referred to himself as a man and an English not take the advice in definition?

There are many so reasons for doing pr Some of them have been in this new Oxford is It is really fair to either example, or to the tr spring from (in the 19 century) to have Wales the "Daffodil" trans the Welsh, followed by the poets' dates of birth terminating factor—by I well-known political c remember 1926?" The complicated many a medievalistic "epicotic trophe, rendered in with that mixture of legalistic and conversat ded ones that is, f reasons no doubt, histo stic of from the Welsh ese:

Lead out to the fier

Be gallant of challenge

insiden who's

Davies's poem, which poster-art (and is currently in fact, on the Welsh Arts Council po

Do you remember 18 summer of songs nand The sunlight on the id

Come hwyl and high water

By Russell Davies

By Russell Davies

How mock, how heroic? And what distance from conversational Welsh to Williams's original words stand, for the equivalents Professor Jones gives as "pleached" and "foison" and "glave"? All the English-speaking reader has to help him is a squiggle at the side of the page denoting a translation; Professor Jones's notes at the back of

Siôn Cent, an excellent poet, should not be confused with Siôn Eos, the legendary harpist, for whom I have had a private affection ever since discovering a note on him in Parry's *Oxford Book of Welsh Verse*. "Siôn Eos, a distinguished harpist," Parry wrote, with a wonderful Welsh-professional disregard for shifts in modern English usage, "killed a man in a chance medley."

From the notes at head and tail of the extract from "Jubilate Agno", it would appear that Smart was indeed one of the keenest Welshmen represented in the book. "Let Belshun rejoice with the Leek. David for ever!" he enthuses, "God bless the Welch March 1st

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Geoffrey Grigson

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The transcendental utilitarian

By Bernard Crick

LLOYD J. HUBENKA (Editor):
Bernard Shaw: Practical Politics
266pp. University of Nebraska
Press. \$17.50.

ALFRED TURCO JR.:
Shaw's Moral Vision
297pp. Cornell University Press.
\$9.45.

Sidney and Beatrice Webb saw themselves as the thinkers and planners of a future socialist commonwealth of Great Britain, and they saw Shaw as their propagandist. They believed that all that he was producing in the first two decades of this century, whether plays, prefaces, speeches or books, was fully consistent with their own aims, simply a division of labour. This is only true with many qualifications, but it is interesting that the three of them thought it to be true.

It is all the more odd that both historians and students of politics have been shy of Shaw, either not taking him seriously or being scared stiff of making fools of themselves by trying to pin down the Irish Proteus. I know of no adequate study of his political thought. Political philosophers, with their high but narrow concerns, regard him as below the salt; and those students of political thought more interested in the formation and effect of ideas now seem to ignore even the biggest social democratic whale in favour of the smallest early Marxist sprat. Students of literature, however, have begun to nibble at his political ideas with some result, particularly in North America where literary criticism and intellectual history, so much less compartmentalized than is often the case here, mingle, at their best, so well.

One has long suspected that

Shaw's propaganda for socialism must have been clearest in his speeches, rather than in his artful prefaces and in his best plays. For the plays, precisely because some of them are great drama and great literature, are much less clear in their moral and political message than is often supposed. They deal in dilemmas quite as much as in solutions; and the solutions plainly shows that they are intended more to undermine the conventional, to stimulate thought about unspecified practical policies, than to exemplify a programme. But in his speeches he spoke more directly, though that is a relative term with Shaw—they contain so much badinage and so many spontaneous flights of fancy and folly, as well as so much serious argument. He thought enough of these speeches to have them printed and make verbal reports of many of them, as soon as he could afford to (that is, not before 1906). Most of the speeches he then revised, not very heavily it would seem, and usually sold them to the press.

So Lloyd J. Hubenka, who is professor of English at Creighton University, has performed a real service by gathering up mainly from newspapers and journals, but including a few hitherto unpublished pieces, some twenty of Shaw's speeches on the general principles of socialism and economics—very few of them are, in fact, about "practical politics" as the title rather misleadingly suggests. One thing that emerges very clearly is that Shaw was the primal bogey-man of the English Telegraph, and the columns which students of social thought have been trying so long to identify: he believed in, and preached incessantly, equal incomes for all. What other socialist thinker was ever such a literal egalitarian? He believed in a uniform "life-garment" rather than competitive wages, a view that Professor Hubenka sees as owing much to Ruskin.

Another enigma that is clarified is that the evolutionary Fabian of the 1880s, 1890s and 1900s did not suddenly turn into the friend and tutor of the 1930s (giving, for instance, money to William Robson and Leonard Woolf to help found *The Political Quarterly* in 1930, but telling them in the same letter that he was wasting his money, as usual, on the future joy with Misses (his and Stalin). These speeches, ranging in date from 1906 to 1944, make clear that his views on revolution or evolution, or on violence or persuasion, were mainly tactical. Evolution was better, but not always possible; he did not believe in the inevitability of gradualism. Act as if that is so, but do not fight with the left hand tied behind one's back.

A good deal of Shaw's seeming extremity of utterance in the 1920s and 1930s emerges as the result of the terrible pain caused by frustration, however objective it may be. He had obviously believed, in the 1890s and 1900s, that society was open to reason, capable of reform, and was on the edge of a new stage of human history when machines, if rescued from capitalist hands, could create plenty for all so that Mr Doellittle could afford morality and would, like his daughter and the professor, become transfigured. But then came the ghastly European civil war of 1914-1919 which he had the painful sense to recognize would continue; he saw that the end of an era, indeed, but heralded a terrible regression, the end of any hope of progress, of higher human evolution, possibly for centuries.

Alfred Turco in *Shaw's Moral Vision* rightly sees *Heartbreak House* as being one of Shaw's best plays and as marking a great break in his thinking. The more sensible members of the crew had been unable to take over the ship, whether by Fabian infiltration or Marxist violence, before Captain Shorrock's prophecy of the "strash of the drunken skipper's ship on the rocks" was fulfilled. As Mr Turco well says, "all of Shaw's artistic career had been an exploration of the possibility of united power and wisdom, action and thought, efficiency and aspiration." *Heartbreak House* is the profound tragedy of the aspiration breaking down. As Shaw himself laments in the preface, "power and culture were in separate compartments" in pre-war Europe. Indeed, Shaw's own despair is the greater

because his hope is not dead. He exhorts us to renewed efforts even as his play's mighty music celebrates the death of the race."

While somewhat lush and over-written towards the end of chapters, and somewhat pedantic in structure (a chapter of its critic for each major play, through each of which he tries to push his main theme, like pushing a python through the drains), Mr Turco's book does give a balanced and interesting account of Shaw's ethic of self-development and evolution. It emerges as a good deal more consistent and philosophically respectable than is often supposed; and, incidentally, as having emerged before and quite independently of Henri Bergson's "creative evolution", or *élan vital*.

Both these books will make much easier some future comprehensive study of Shaw's political ideas, drawing all his different forms of expression together. But it would be a difficult, if very useful and rewarding, task. Perhaps Professor Hubenka expresses why most

Shaw differs from most nineteenth-century reformers in that he draws his ideas for the reconstruction of society from two philosophical strands rather than one. One, the utilitarian tradition of Bentham and Mill, essentially political in nature. The other, the transcendentalist tradition of Carlyle and Ruskin, scoffed at any hope for progress through parliamentary legislation, insisting instead that until each human heart reformed itself there was little hope for the amelioration of the human condition. Thus, to use Kesteven's terms, Shaw is part Yogi and part Communist. For Shaw's readers, the disturbing thing is, of course, that Shaw does not choose between these two traditions: he uses ideas and principles from one or both—whenever it serves his purpose.

Neither author is, at the end of his interesting book, quite clear just what his purpose was; nor even clear whether it is possible to be clear.

The clerical classes

By Peter Clarke

GEOFFREY CROSSICK (Editor):
The Lower Middle Class in Britain
1870-1914
213pp. Croom Helm. £7.95.

As Geoffrey Crossick, the editor of this useful volume of essays points out, "the sheer lack of honest literary accounts for the lower middle class in Britain, unlike Germany, it cradled no significant political movements and its social role has been generally passive. The comment of C. Wright Mills on American white-collar workers is apposite here: 'Whatever history they have had is a history without events; whatever common interests they have do not lead to unity; whatever future they have will not be of their own making.'"

And yet, in a slightly different sense, there is already considerable literature about the lower middle class in the period covered here (1870-1914). This was the world of Mr Potter. One of the contributors goes so far as to blame *The Diary of a Nobody* for the clerk's image as a cliché figure. But the Grossmills' famous novel, together with those of H. G. Wells, is none the less referred to in nearly every essay; the only other literary source of comparable importance is probably the more sensible members of the crew had been unable to take over the ship, whether by Fabian infiltration or Marxist violence, before Captain Shorrock's prophecy of the "strash of the drunken skipper's ship on the rocks" was fulfilled. As Mr Turco well says, "all of Shaw's artistic career had been an exploration of the possibility of united power and wisdom, action and thought, efficiency and aspiration."

Heartbreak House is the profound tragedy of the aspiration breaking down. As Shaw himself laments in the preface, "power and culture were in separate compartments" in pre-war Europe. Indeed, Shaw's own despair is the greater

Clerks were archetypically lower-middle-class; so were small shop-

keepers and other petty-bourgeois groups. But the economic position of these two sections was not identical. They were certainly not constituted as a Marxian class by a similar relation to the means of production. Blackcoated workers were a sort of upper proletariat, dependent on negotiating satisfactory terms of employment within the labour market, and finding increasing difficulty in doing so in the late nineteenth century. The shopkeepers, on the other hand, were small commercial capitalists, though also suffering acute difficulties during the recurrent periods of bad trade in these years. As The Vigne and Alan Hawkins suggest, on the basis of an intensive mining of oral evidence, there was great diversity among shopkeepers themselves. The size of the business, its degree of specialization, and the sort of community it served, made the shopkeeper a very different figure in the society of an urban slum or a market town. Amid all these qualifications, it sometimes seems as if all that the lower-middle-classes had in common was their respectability and their anxieties, not forgetting their anxieties about their respectability.

Perhaps, indeed, the phenomenon of popular jingoism in the late nineteenth century can be explained in terms of the clerk's virtually universal anxiety for his credit. In a solid and well-documented survey, Martin Gaskell examines the sort of houses which they inhabited: Potterish villas in unfashionable suburbs, but more a real need in an economic crisis. Whatever the reason, housing reform aimed at the working class usually failed to help those for whom they were intended. But the building societies, artisans' dwellings and, later, garden suburbs which proved beyond the means of the workers turned out to be a boon for the lower middle class. A search and substantial introductory essay by the editor, Geoffrey Crossick, pulls together many of the themes raised in *The Lower Middle Class in Britain 1870-1914*, which largely succeeds in its purpose of exposing the neglect of these neglected problems for wider discussion.

Their niches, however, were the last thing that the Victorian clerks were prepared to lose. An appeal, by way from *The Clerks' Journal* of 1889 is reprinted here, and it sums up their confused and sulky resentment of the working man: "He would strike if they gave him any weekly wage, and they never ask him for income tax."

At the time this was written tax was assessed on incomes of over £150 a year, and the working man who took strike action to demand three pounds a week was unheard of. Such considerations do not mean that the clerks' anxieties were any less real to themselves. A sense of relative deprivation depends on what subjective points of reference are selected for comparison.

The quest for respectability sometimes reinforced religious observance. Hugh McLeod explores some points of contact between religion and cultural values; and though this essay is rather tentative, it is considerably more illuminating than that of Robert Gray on the mediation of hegemonic values through religion—in itself a worthwhile subject though suffering here from fault of exposition.

In one respect the lower middle class was a very different group from the clerks. This is the argument of Richard Price in one of the most interesting essays collected here. He has, in a previous book, already documented the prominence of the clerk in the rowdy patriotic demonstrations during the Boer War. He now suggests that this participation was a response to the threat to their position which they perceived in hostile economic trends and the rise of the labour movement. Greg Anderson gives further backing to the notion that clerks were being forced into an increasingly marginal position by developments within the late Victorian economy. This depressed middle class might have declined, as George Orwell put it forty years later, to "sink without further struggle of the Boer War class where we belong, with the consolation, though that we have nothing to lose but our attitudes."



John Morley, as monumental mason, putting the final touches to his *Gladstone*. Morley was Gladstone's official biographer, and published the three volumes of his work in 1903. Gladstone, whose plinth is inscribed with the names of the military disasters of Khartoum and Majuba Hill (ironically so, as he was opposed to British colonial expansion in Africa), and who is holding an Irish harp (upon which he failed to play the tune of Home Rule), is none the less being tried out for sainthood by his biographer. A watercolour, pen and black ink, signed by the artist Max Beerhohn, and for sale at Christie's today.

The warlord of the Niger

By Roland Oliver

YVES PERSON:
Samori
3 volumes
2,377pp. Dakar: Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire.

The colonial partition of Africa during the last quarter of the nineteenth century is generally and correctly seen as a sudden and externally motivated interruption. Earlier European involvement in the continent had been of a much more limited and slow-moving kind which need never have led to a general carve-up. Partition came about as it did primarily through the intervention of powers new to the African scene, and its opening phase was an affair mainly of paper. Rights up to about 1885 most of Africa remained in practice independent, and large pockets of independent territory continued to exist for at least a decade after that.

It is therefore curious that the burgeoning interest in African history has so far devoted comparatively little attention to the question of whether such an independent Africa was heading on the eve of Europe's great act of interference. It was after all a subject on which colonists and colonial rulers alike had early developed their own self-justificatory answers, according to which European rule had rescued Africa from tyranny, disease and inter-tribal war. Post-colonial historiography, mostly anti-colonial in sympathy, has opened up the longer perspectives of pre-colonial African history, and within the colonial period it has concentrated on the different manifestations of "resistance" and their contributions to the rise of "nationalism". The last phase of pre-colonial independence has in comparison been neglected, perhaps for the very reason that it was destined so soon to be extinguished.

And yet it was in most of the continent a period of revolutionary change, which saw the supersession of traditional methods of trade and warfare, and in political organization a trend towards larger units which would have assumed great significance had Africa retained its independence. Even as things turned out, the circumstances of colonial rule were doubly affected by the radical changes of the immediately preceding years.

In Africa as a whole, the period from about 1850 till about 1890 was dominated by the trade in firearms, including an ever-increasing proportion of the quick-firing, precision weapons which had been in use in Europe from the Crimean War onwards. These were no longer merely aids to ivory-hunting and slave-raiding. They were the instruments of power, the great power, came from Africa where a ruler possessing a hundred modern weapons could intervene decisively in the succession struggles of all the smaller states in his neighbourhood. To possess a thousand was to be, in Africa, a great power, capable of setting one upon the path of conquest. Warfare still often involved the deployment of large armies, but its fortunes were decided by the efficiency of well-armed corps *déité*.

Sometimes, as in Ethiopia, the largest and most modern armaments were built up by traditional states. The systematic purchase of firearms in exchange for ivory brought Menelik of Shoa to the imperial throne, and subsequently enabled him to double the size of his empire. As a rule, however, the arms of the new armaments remained in the hands of the long-distance traders, who used them either in support of local princes or else to supplant them. It was in the eastern Congo basin that immigrant, arms-dealing traders, the greatest power, with the "empires" of Misri in the Kananga and of Tippu Tip between the Luabala and Lomami.

During the same period Samori Turé was the greatest of the self-made merchant princes of the West African interior. Born about 1830 in the hinterland of modern Guinea, he began his career some twenty years later as a trader in kola, buying his first nuts with chickens given to him by his father and selling them for salt, carried up the Niger tributaries from Timbuktu and the Sahara. Soon he was buy-

fringes of the Guinea forest, selling them for gold on the fringes of the savanna, and exchanging the gold for cattle and firearms in the markets of the Futa Jallon, where traders came from the British enclave at Freetown.

Around 1853 Samori turned from trade to warfare, enlisting as a mercenary leader in the service of various Malinke chiefs. In 1861 he struck out on his own, beginning with seven followers in the hilly corner of his home country of Kono. His earliest campaigns made him the military protector of two small Malinke states in the valley of the Milo tributary of the Upper Niger. By 1867 he was the effective ruler of 6,500 square kilometres and of a population of about 36,000.

There followed a brief period of consolidation, while he built up the best army in the region, an army in which every man had a gun, and in which the infantry units were supported by a nucleus of well-trained cavalry.

Such an army was designed for conquest, and its momentum could be maintained only by a process of rapid and sustained political expansion. By 1874 Samori was ruling 75,000 people living in 20,000 square kilometres. By 1878 his territory covered 180,000 square kilometres and his subjects numbered 300,000. By 1885 the last figure was to exceed one million, and his territory was to form a great arc comprising all the headwaters of the Niger from the Senegal to the Niger, and had set a northerly limit to Samori's advance downriver. The writing was on the wall but for six years more they left him alone in the forest villages and the scattered hamlets of the savanna. Samori used these years to expand west and east—westwards in the direction of the Sierra Leone arms trade, eastwards in the direction of the nearest breeding-ground for horses in the Mossi country of the Niger bend. It was the moment of his widest territorial expansion.

Then, in 1889, he faced revolt at home, and the French moved south. There was a temporary stabilization, but in 1892 Samori decided to abandon the westward course of his empire and to build a new one in the east—in the borderlands between Ivory Coast, Upper Volta and the Gold Coast. With perhaps 100,000 Mande soldiers and camp followers, he established a parasitic hegemony over a mixed bag of Senoufo, Dogon, Gurusi, Baule, Brong and many other ethnic groups. Thus he survived until 1898, when the French finally closed in on him from the south and the north simultaneously. He died two years later, in exile in the Gabon, remembered by his conquerors as a bloodthirsty tyrant and slave-trader, and by a later generation of his own countrymen as a hero of anti-colonial resistance, a freedom-fighter.

It is more than twenty years since Yves Person, now Professor of African History at the Sorbonne, began work on his great biographical study of Samori. He was then a colonial administrator in French West Africa. Between 1955 and 1963 his duties took him to Guinea, Mali, Ivory Coast and Upper Volta, and afforded him the opportunity to interview 861 informants. Since then he has searched the archives in Paris, London, Dakar, Konakry, Abidjan, Bamako, Freetown and Accra. The published text of his work extends to more than 1,500 quarto pages, and is accompanied by over 650 pages of notes and 300 pages of appendices, bibliography and index. Publication has already taken seven years, and a volume of maps is still awaited, without which much of the detailed narrative must remain largely unilluminating.

Even the most fastidious of readers will ask themselves whether such an exercise in *outré* *de poids* is not in large measure self-defeating. No doubt, as Person claims, the systematic confrontation of written sources and oral traditions gives "great solidity" to the reconstruction of Samori's last twenty years. And certainly it is these years that have run away with most of the

they were not the most important years. During the last seventeen of them the French were making most of the running. During the last twelve Samori was clearly past his peak, having suffered military defeat, loss of prestige and internal revolt. His "second empire" was in reality an operation to salvage what he could of his military power in the face of French encroachment. Essentially, it was an act of retreat.

By far the most important part of Person's contribution lies in his reconstruction, overwhelmingly from oral sources, of the Malinke-speaking world in which Samori grew up in great obscurity and which, during his middle age, he so largely transformed. This was the region speaking the same language as the historical Mali empire, but never included within it, where the southern Mande people abutted on the very different populations of the equatorial forest. Politically it was organized in tiny states, mostly no more than twenty or thirty kilometres in diameter, with the population concentrated in the river valleys and the intertribes nearly uninhabited. These were strongly nucleated agricultural societies which raided their neighbours for slaves during the dry season, and retreated into the fortified strongholds of their petty kings when threatened by superior force. Warfare was not a new thing.

The only enduring threads linking the region as a whole were those of long-distance trade passing up the valleys to the forested highlands where grew the refreshing and stimulating kola-nuts that were distributed as a valuable luxury throughout the sub-Saharan savanna. Transport in this zone was by caravans of human porters, often slaves, who needed to pass in safety from statelet to statelet and to find food and shelter along the way. The Dyuula, these people were to French eyes, were a kind of nomadic states, more or less military in character, but always connected with the protection of the trade-routes and favouring the Dyuula merchants.

This is very likely correct, but one feels that it understates the degree of modernizing change brought about by Samori and others like him during the last stages of the pre-colonial period in Africa. Had European intervention continued to develop at its pre-Leopoldian, pre-Bismarckian pace, there would have been more Ethiopias and more Liberias in Africa. The Sudan would have been an independent state. Zanzibar would have encompassed much of East Africa. There would have been Muslim states, ruled by merchant princes to the east and west of the Great Lakes. The Empires of Bornu and Sokoto would have survived, very likely also Ashanti, Futa Jallon and the Tucolor state of Futa Toro. In such a scenario, a Dyula-led confederation of southern Mande states might have held a position of at least second rank.

Even as things turned out, the Dyuula supporters of Samori—Muslim, travelled, literate and commercially numerate—were to be among the key groups of the West Africa, corresponding to the Wangwana of German and British East Africa, and to the Manyema of King Leopold's Congo. "It is curious but significant", Person concludes,

that the most lasting effect of the Samorian adventure was one which prepared the way for European colonialism. The Dyuula social class, which had most wholeheartedly supported the conqueror, was particularly well suited, by its individualism, enterprise and competitiveness, to insert itself into the cash economy which emerged in the new colonies. As the agents of commercial companies, and as their intermediaries with the producers scattered through the countryside, these people were to find a place in the European economic order, and were to profit by it before eventually challenging it. It was to be by their mediation that the impact of the colonisers was to impinge upon the rural masses, and stir them up, so preparing their own undoing.

There is no balking the fact that this would have been a better and more useful book if presented in one third of the present length. Samori is nevertheless a major contribution to African history.

state farms in the neighbourhood of his capital and his garrison towns. The export of slaves to neighbouring states was in comparison a subsidiary feature of his early empire, though it increased greatly in importance when he later moved out of Mande country to the coast. This, however, merely reflected the fact that the second empire was economically less self-sufficient than the first. For Samori slavery was not a moral issue but a fact of life.

Ideologically, Samori's model state was probably the Islamicocracy of the neighbouring Futa Jallon. Certainly, as his power grew, so did his religious commitment. As a successful warlord of fifty, he learnt Arabic in order to study the Koran, and he spent his leisure hours in the company of a learned marabout of the Qadiri order. The hostage sons of his vassal chiefs were rigorously segregated in remote places under the tuition of Muslim teachers. His soldiers were expected to observe the outward formalities of Islam. In all these matters he went too far for the majority of his people, and this was a major cause of the revolts of 1888-90. In the new empire, though the Dyuula traders were still important, Islam was much less strongly emphasized as the state religion.

Considering the scale of his own historiographical effort, Person puts forward only modest claims about the significance of his work. He thinks that, even had there been no European intervention, Samori's empire would not have survived its founder. The most likely result, he says, would have been a kind of nebula of states, more or less military in character, but always connected with the protection of the trade-routes and favouring the Dyuula merchants.

This is very likely correct, but one feels that it understates the degree of modernizing change brought

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The
Hogarth
Press

TLS Commentary

Sous les toits d'Aberystwyth

By Richard Cobb

It was something of a wrench to move straight from Paris to Aberystwyth in the autumn of 1955, after spending eleven years in France and Belgium, mostly in Paris. When I first arrived, I was so shocked by the forlorn aspect of Welsh urban architecture and by the feeling that I was literally "at the end of the line", in a very small town right in the middle of the great high of aridigan Bay, that I spent my first weekend alternately reading *Lucky Jim* on a sofa in the utterly barren residents' lounge of a small hotel, and taking trips to the station in order to reassure myself of the visible presence of the Cambrian Coast Express, the guarantee that there did exist a physical link with London and beyond; but as my second day in Aberystwyth was a Sunday, even that sparse consolation was denied me. It was the first time in my life I was thirty-eight—that I had taken up a regular job, and I had been on only very brief visits to England—once a year, or once every other year, since 1944.

My mood remained one of deep gloom for several weeks, in fact till the annual November fair, when I was enveloped by a steam organ that blared out with tremendous gusto and a bracknell speed "The Yellow Rose of Texas", so that I listened to it every evening of that week. By then I had made several other discoveries: that, if one looked hard enough, there were a few quiet handsome nineteenth-century shops in small streets away from the promenade; that, over the other side of the small harbour, there was a row of white-washed fishermen's cottages, and that a family of five was living in what had been an unoccupied Grosvenor bus; that, very early in the morning or at the turn of the tide, a regular group of elderly men, some wearing peaked nautical-looking caps, others bowlers or cloth caps, scoured the three beaches for drift-wood, coasters, carrying the proper haul sunk in the bay some time previously—or any other treasures offered up by the sea (there was a persistent rumour about a leather purse, greenish from immersion, containing thirty sovereigns); that, on most days, one could see a big black corvette diving for fish; and that, during our Thursday departmental meetings, my professor, who had certainly never heard of Kingsley Amis, and indeed had little interest

in anyone who had lived later than Simon de Moutfort, would answer the phone "History Speaking". By then, I had also discovered that it was possible to drink on Sundays by joining the Marine Club, and that the surrounding countryside, both inland and along the coast, was of quite biblical beauty and innocence, and, well inland, of weird abandonment.

But my most surprising discovery was that I thoroughly enjoyed lecturing, in conditions that, throughout winter, meant competing with the crash of the sea, the roar of the westerly gales and the screams of the gulls. My audience—large because it was a first year: the pretty South Wallian girls, and those from Llanelli understandingly so, in the front rows, a fairly passive middle ground, the last tiers to the back dominated by the solid forms of the rugby club—had both to be made to hear me against the competition from outside, and to be kept interested. A single attempt to lecture on the Sublime Porte ended in chaos, my first evocation of the Black Bunch (I was unable to carry on to the white one); and I quickly abandoned any attempt to cope with Russian institutions. My lectures were in the nature of a circus act and owed much to audience participation. After less than a term, I was emphasizing certain words on certain syllables, pausing insistently to do so. I had, quite unconsciously, acquired a Welsh cadence: a teaching device I suppose almost as admirable as spoken Russian.

My pupils were completely unpretentious, pleasantly irreverent and egalitarian, and very quick to

spot fraud or showmanship. In fact, I could not have had better masters. Jokes were a matter of very fine calculation, as they would have to carry a double appeal to the front-row flowerbeds and to the rugged rear-guard; the middle would always follow. Inward jokes, involving some knowledge at least of Welsh topography, were the most successful; and, like Claude Lévi-Strauss in his years at São Paulo, I had to be able to cope with at least two sets of Christian names: Hywel Wesley Jones, Griffith Craig Evans, and so on, in order to address my pupils individually.

UCW was a small, tight, but varied community. There were over forty pubs in Aberystwyth, even more pubs than chapels, and each one had its specialized clientele: there was one, run by a very old untidy lady, whose three bars were always empty; another sold evil-smelling "scrumpy", producing its own extensive Saturday-night network of vomit, sometimes reaching almost to the station. A number sang, in Welsh, a sound as beautiful as the waves of the angry sea. The rugby club had generally to penetrate farther and farther inland: when I first went there, a zone interdicted by the police, the club was in Lampeter. But, as I was a resident at different times, in four hotels, I was sometimes able to accommodate the rugby club at least in drink; and, as a result, was asked to leave two. It gave me a feeling of warm satisfaction to know which of my students would be in which pubs on which night. I am a provincial and enjoy the reassurance of habit.

I also greatly enjoyed the finely

The Green Dragon: from "The Book of Ishness", a sketch-book of J. R. R. Tolkien's during from his undergraduate days. This drawing was dated later, in 1927, and was inspired by a line from Beowulf: "the heart of the curled creature incited to seek strife." From the catalogue of Tolkien's drawings at the National Book League, 7 Albemarle Street, London W1, until April 7.



Merciful release

Tel Quel, long the furthest out of Parisian quarters, whose allegiance these days seems to be shared between the libertarian delights of Mao's China and the polyglot anarchy of *Finnegans Wake*, is the last place one would look to find a tribute to the late André Malraux. Many and various were the pictures from the French establishment when Malraux died, fewer but pointed the objections to both his post-war politics and his books from the progressive left. But in the now Spring 1977, number of *Tel Quel*, Philippe Sollers, who is very progressive and very left, salutes Malraux for various orthodox and one highly unorthodox reason. The last is best given in his own words:

It was in 1962. I refused either to do my national service or to fight in Algeria. I hung around military hospitals in eastern France no longer eating or speaking, but carrying a razor blade on me day and night so that I could take things further, even as far as suicide (a forged one, anyway). If I was not invalidated out, an army doctor made me understand that I was being persistently just how schizoid I was. I was waiting for Paris to intervene. Time passed, the snow fell, the tests continued. After three months, a constant refusal to speak involves a genuine risk. A mental haze, waiting for what. What were my friends in Paris doing? I learnt afterwards that basically they weren't too unhappy to be rid of me. The one remaining hope was for Malraux to intervene. He did, like lightning. Three days later, I was freed.

Thus Middleton Murry, in the TLS of March 3, 1927, on the occasion of the Nonesuch edition of "Benito Cereno". The issue also contained a review by Elliot, of the first study of Christopher Marlowe.

TLS Commentary

Back to Durkheim

In French universities, Durkheimism "reigned" over sociology from 1902 to 1955, though academic Durkheimism was challenged from the 1940s onwards. Now, after an interregnum, French sociologists are rediscovering Durkheim, some years later than their Anglo-Saxon colleagues. The new wave of interest involves a number of quite different approaches to his work, as illustrated in the six admirably diverse articles which make up the bulk of an issue, titled "Appropos de Durkheim", of the *Revue Française de Sociologie* (Vol 17, No 2). The issue was not planned in advance as a tribute to Durkheim but was the spontaneous result of converging articles submitted to the *Revue*.

The longest and most densely packed with detail of these articles is that by Victor Karady, with immense footnotes swamping the actual text and taxing the eyes by the smallness of their print, but worth the effort. He draws on extensive researches, completed or in progress, in particular on his (unpublished) report entitled "Stratification intellectuelle, rapports sociaux et institutionnalisation: Equilibre socio-historique sur la naissance de la sociologie en France". Victor Karady was previously responsible for bringing out three sizable volumes of Durkheimian *Textes* (published in 1975 by Editions de Minuit) which assemble a great variety of reviews, articles, spoken contributions at learned gatherings, obituaries, prefaces and so forth. A shorter but broadly similar collection had been presented by Jean-Claude Filloux, with substantial introduction, under the title *La science sociale et l'action*.

Filloux contributes to the present volume an excellent, mildly psycho-analytical piece, "Il ne faut pas oublier que le fils de Durkheim". (According to Durkheim's nephew, the title of rabbi had passed from father to son over eight generations.) Mourned Cherkouff's article draws attention to Durkheim's relatively neglected *Evolution pédagogique en France*, in which he shows a sense of history and its conflicts not too far removed from that of his great competitor, Marx. Bernard Lacroix argues convincingly that Durkheim's original vocation was political; he adapts a mot of Gervillat to read: "Emile Durkheim a inventé la science politique en cherchant à fonder une morale". Pierre Birbaurn discusses Durkheim's concept of the state as an independent, rational organism and of political civil servants who should not be allowed to go on strike—a prohibition applying equally to postmen and professors. Finally Philippe Renaud contributes a lively review of Jean Baele's *Les Suicides* (Calmann-Lévy, 1975) which attempts to discredit the statistics

on suicide used by Durkheim as well as the conclusions he drew from them.

Also included in this issue—the whole of which should be read by anyone seriously interested in Durkheim—are a number of unpublished or previously unknown Durkheim writings, including his contribution to an international congress on social education in 1900. Also a bibliography of writings on Durkheim, mainly recent (including fifteen from Japan) and reviews of a number of publications in the Durkheimian field. A group to promote the international exchange of information between Durkheim specialists has been set up. Correspondence should be addressed to Philippe Renaud, S.E.I.A., Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 54 Boulevard Raspail, 75006 Paris.

Home helps

The first of the underground public lavatories in London—they were called "Halting Stations"—opened outside the Royal Exchange in 1855. One spent a penny from 1855 until 1971, when decriminalization put an end to this all-time winner over public urinals. Lavatories in private houses by the turn of the century were decorated with flowers inside and out: they are splendidly illustrated in David de Haan's *Antique Household Gadgets and Appliances c. 1860-1930* (165pp. Poole, Dorset: Blandford Press. £3.25).

The decoration was "so delicate", writes Mr de Haan, "it must have made people loth to use it". So far from reinforcing a belief in the benefits of advanced technology, the book reminds one how much has been lost. Rocking-horses, notoriously, have lost all their breeding. And in 1870 you could buy a flat, curved, copper hot-water bottle called a *Belly-Warmer*; while a radiator of 1911, made of cast iron and fully decorated with gilded scrollwork, incorporated a small even for keeping crumpeys or pyjamas—comfortably warm. A "servant's press bodstead" which folded neatly away into a cupboard by day would make an ideal spare bed in a modern flat. "Good taste" in modern design has usually meant our ancestor's lack of ornamentation, even gas-lights, at the turn of the century, had their flames cupped by art-nouveau lilies.

Much that is officially "antique" is however still with us. Blesséd carpet-sweepers look much as they did in 1876. Spong mincora have hardly changed in appearance since the 1880s. There was an Emmet-like tea-making machine in 1902, the false glow of "Magical" began in 1915, and the friendly Aa, invented in 1924, has, with modifications, become a classic. The greatest surprise of all is that, while a million housewives every day may not then have been picking up a can, those beans have been with us since 1905.

THE EMPEROR IN THE ROMAN WORLD

Fergus Millar

How was the Roman empire "ruled"? In a world in which it might take weeks of months for communications to be transmitted, how did the emperor and his subjects, what in fact was "government"? What did the people expect of the emperor, and how did they judge him? In this important book, Fergus Millar, Professor of Ancient History in the University of London, offers a large-scale reconstruction of the function of the emperor and the social realities of his exercise of power over three centuries from Augustus to Constantine.

THE MIDDLE PLATONISTS

John Dillon

This is the first book in English, or indeed any language, to have been specifically devoted to a period in the history of thought—stretching from Cicero to Plotinus—which, though generally neglected, was in fact unusually influential for later ages. It was then that the subject matter and formal organization of philosophy in general were effectively fixed for a thousand years and more, through the ages of Scholasticism and the Renaissance, down to quite modern times. John Dillon is Professor of Classics in the University of California at Berkeley.

DUCKWORTH

The Old Pland Factory, 43 Gloucester Crescent, London NW1

Nicholas Wade's Trousers

These trousers used to belong to W. H. Auden, who gave them to me when he was living in Oxford. He was handing me a petit four biscuit when he inadvertently knocked over the teapot, drenching my trousers with hot Lapsang Souchow, and kindly looked out a spare pair for me to wear home. Just as I was about to parcel them up in order to return them, I received the news of his death, and that is how I come to be wearing them now.

When W. H. Auden was living in Switzerland, before his move to Oxford, he was visited by a group that included Louis MacNeice, and at the end of the stay when they were engaged in a last game of strip poker, the taxi arrived to take the guests to their train. In the rush to get ready, MacNeice put on the wrong pair of trousers, leaving his own with W. H. Auden, who passed them on to me.

The other day I was wearing these trousers, which were given to me by W. H. Auden, who got them from Louis MacNeice, when I happened to bump in to Ted Hughes. "Eh up, lad", he said. "By gum, them's a reet gradely pair o' trousers tha's wearing."

Dylan Thomas became so drunk one evening in the French Pub in Soho that he passed out in the gents, and the landlord put him to bed kindly taking his trousers to sponge them down. The next day Dylan Thomas departed for America, so the landlord gave the trousers to Louis MacNeice to look after, and when Thomas's death was announced, MacNeice was stuck with them until he lost them to Wylan Auden, who handed them on to me.

The other day I was wearing these trousers, which were given to me by Wylan Auden, who got them from Louis MacNeice, who got them from the Landlord of the French Pub, who got them from Dylan Thomas, when I happened to bump in to Hugh MacDiarmid. "Och, Laddie", he said. "Yon's a braw muckle reekit pair of breeks you're wearing."

Evelyn Waugh, while performing as a panellist on the Brains Trust, had taken these trousers with him intending to drop them off later at his tailor to be shortened. However, so incensed was he by the behaviour of Professor Joad that he left the trousers in the studio where they were found by Dylan Thomas, who left them with the Landlord of the French Pub, who gave them to Louis MacNeice, who lost them to Wylan Auden, who passed them on to me.

The other day I was wearing these trousers, which were given to me by Wylan Auden, who got them from Louis MacNeice, who got them from the Landlord of the French Pub, who got them from Dylan Thomas, who got them from Evelyn Waugh, when I happened to bump in to Charles Causley. "Well, bwoy", he said. "Think be a voline girt pair of britches you'm wearing."

George Orwell, who fought and was wounded in the Spanish Civil War, came into the possession of these trousers on the death of John Cornford who, due to an administrative cock-up, they were returned to his family with their other effects, and asked Cecil Day Lewis to take them back to England for him. When he reached London Day Lewis left them for a short while with the porter at White's, who gave them in error to Evelyn Waugh, who left them at the BBC where they were found by Dylan Thomas, who left them with the Landlord of the French Pub, who gave them to Louis MacNeice, who lost them to Wylan Auden, who passed them on to me.

The other day I was wearing these trousers, which were given to me by Wylan Auden, who got them from Louis MacNeice, who got them from the Landlord of the French Pub, who got them from Dylan Thomas, who got them from Cecil Day Lewis, who got them from George Orwell, who got them from John Cornford, when I happened to bump in to Seamus Heaney. "Begoh, Paddy", he said. "There's a lovely pair of molskins you're after wearing, to be sure."

The poetess Frances Cornford, who wrote the lines describing Rupert Brooke as "A young Apollo, golden haired, / Standing on the verge of strife, / Magnificently unprepared / For the long littleness of life", came into the possession of these trousers when Rupert Brooke left them in her garden in Cambridge after a bathing party. Brooke had told her that he was wearing them at the Café des Westons in Berlin on the day in May, 1912, when he wrote his famous poem about the Old Vicarage, Grantchester. Frances Cornford gave them to her son, John, who was killed in the Spanish Civil War, where George Orwell gave them to Cecil Day Lewis to bring back to London, where he left them with the porter at White's, who gave them to Evelyn Waugh, who left them at the BBC where they were found by Dylan Thomas, who left them with the Landlord of the French Pub, who gave them to Louis MacNeice, who lost them to Wylan Auden, who passed them on to me.

The other day I was wearing these trousers, which were given to me by Wylan Auden, who got them from Louis MacNeice, who got them from the Landlord of the French Pub, who got them from Dylan Thomas, who got them from Evelyn Waugh, who got them from the porter at White's, who got them from Cecil Day Lewis, who got them from George Orwell, who got them from John Cornford, who got them from Rupert Brooke, when I happened to bump in to Sir John Betjeman. "Golly, Wade", he said. "You're sporting a jolly fine pair of bags. Would you mind awfully telling me where you got them?"

And I did.

Nicholas Wade



The Oxford Book of Welsh Verse in English

Chosen by Gwyn Jones

The Oxford Book of Welsh Verse in English is the most comprehensive anthology of Welsh poetry yet to appear. Designed to acquaint the English-language reader with the Welsh poetic achievement from the Heroic Age of Britain to the present day, its choice of 238 poems, 141 of them translated from the Welsh, covers a chronological span from Taliesin (sixth century) to Gwyn Thomas (b.1936). £3.95

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Anthony Phillips

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Mary Tregear

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Oxford University Press

To the Editor

Literary Research

Sir,—There is good sense in George Watson's article on "Literary Research" (February 25), and some grim sense, but I am surprised that he desires to see people "researching on how the study of English poetry or literary history can be introduced into the study of English as a second language". Please, no research! Let them go and do it.

As people have been doing it for ages, I could never see how anyone could teach language except by teaching literature—or how literature could be taught without language getting learnt as well. But I do not believe we want systematizations, in this form or otherwise, of how to do it. There are already systems relating to the teaching of English as a second or equal-first language by means of language laboratories and other strictly non-literary aids, and in my experience what these have done is teach teachers how to teach a language without having to know it to students who learn it without getting to know it.

In this field it is not that research needs to be done, but that some research needs to be undone.

D. J. ENRIGHT.

R. H. Tawney

Sir,—Very well, then, R. H. Tawney once more, especially as in my earlier letter I did not seem to have got my meaning across. Let us remind ourselves what this discussion is about: not how to remove dirty finger-marks from Tawney's halo, but whether his *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* deserves to be thought one of the most overrated books of the past seventy-five years. My critics' reaction makes my point for me. I have maintained that the book did not really merit its enormous reputation because Tawney derived his conclusions from preconceived convictions which he documented with evidence chosen under the guidance of his assumptions; his accepted contemporary comment as though it were contemporary fact, and he allowed none to be judged out of the mouths of their self-confessed critics. The book's remarkable impact was achieved by unsatisfactory historical methods. Those, by the way, who have questioned my view of its effect upon a whole generation (especially of non-historians) seem to have forgotten their days in school and in ABCA classes.

Such tendentious errors of method tend to be common to all purpose-ridden history, whether it is whiggish, socialist, slavishly imitative, imperialist, and they are met. It just so happens that among the possible varieties only "progressive" history still enjoys prestige.

Theodore Rabb (from whom I am always willing to take lessons in temperateness) says some good and true things about Tawney and some nasty and not very true ones about myself (Letters, February 25). He

is very welcome to both. What he fails to do is to address himself to the issue under discussion, but perhaps he has not occurred to him that a historian's work needs to be measured against the evidence he alleges and the manner in which that is treated. John Volz (February 25) misses the point altogether, anxious as he is to testify to his devotion to historical study which I raised. But if he is right in saying that Tawney thought the nation at its best in the days when Englishmen killed more Englishmen than ever before or since, I shall have to revise my high respect for Tawney's humanity.

On the other hand, I am glad to find the Master of Balliol in the lists (Letters, February 18): these debates would seem incomplete without the ritual sparring-match between us. And who better than Christopher Hill to defend Tawney's style of history? But he, too, will not turn his mind to that; instead he talks of political affiliation. I am grateful to him for introducing Namier into the discussion. When I considered your request to nominate a "most overrated book" in my line of country, I could not make up my mind between Tawney's *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, and I finally abandoned the struggle because I could not think of an underrated book at all. My reasons would have been the same for Namier.

deficiencies in historical method aggravating the dominance of preconceived ideas. Yes, Tawney set his mark on historical studies (Rabb). Yes, Tawney inspires high respect (Hill). Yes, Tawney is neither mean nor selfish (Volz). And yes, Tawney damaged historical studies by the selective and uncritical methods he employed and to which his achievement gave long-lasting influence (Elton). If Tawney (as I am sure he would have wished to be) had been treated like any other historian, to be argued with and dissented from, there would have been no problem. But he has been canonized and his books are regarded as holy writ. How can a book which has not got overrated when that is its fate? The acolytes must take the blame.

G. R. ELTON.
Clara College, Cambridge.

Reputations Revisited

Sir,—William Empson's swift retreat to the 1810 *Friend* (Letters, February 18) parts of which had indeed been dictated to Sara Hutchinson, will not help. For what he asserts has been found by scholars, the massive appropriations from Schelling do not appear in the *Friend* until the revised version of 1816, again long after Coleridge had parted from Sara.

I will forego lingering over this related error, for they are, after all, harmless. What is unfortunately misleading is that Mr. Empson disowns the spectrally

devised theory of confused Coleridgean dictation of forgotten translations in old memorandums, behind which nineteenth-century scholars ignorantly rallied, but which the recent availability of the notebooks themselves has at last, I thought, exorcised from Coleridge studies. The 1818 *Friend*, for example, is honeycombed with echo-chambers from philosophers and historians older than Schelling. Some of its most celebrated passages are undeclared imitations. The deeply affecting tale of Maria Eleanor Schelling, including many delicate touches long assumed to come from Coleridge the poet, prove no precise translations from one Jonas Ludwig von Hess. Coleridge grandly noted that he recalled the story from his student sojourn in Germany many years before, but trusted "the fidelity of my recollections", and would tell the tale "in my own language"—a phrase with Hess's volumes open on his desk.

Mr. Empson can be forgiven for not knowing that the most important cooperative project to continue from Schelling but from Kant, in so far as the two-volume edition in the *Collected Coleridge*, which will be standard for generations, ignores Joseph Warren Beach's identification of STC's verbatim translations, and Rens Wellek's detailed account of the debts in his classic *Kant in England*. The names of these two great scholars, whose work has been so distressing to some Coleridgeans, are strangely absent also in the otherwise almost unprecedently voluminous annotations in the third volume of Coleridge's *Notebooks*, where their writings are of fundamental relevance. Informed and responsible reviewing ought long since to have called these and similar lacunae to the attention of the learned world.

As to the Dyer passage, Mr. Empson masterfully tells us what Lamb "undoubtedly" meant. But to Thomas McFarland it is "quite unmistakable" that the same passage means something quite different. They agree, however, that my crippled incapacity to understand Lamb, when not "peric to contemptible" is a fit subject for critical hilarity.

Mr. Empson attributes to W. J. Tate the theory that Coleridge "was afraid of going to Hell if he expressed unorthodox opinions . . . but he felt comparatively safe when he dictated to Sara the translations from Schelling in his *Notebooks*". Since Coleridge was putting forward his ideas as his own, and not just whom did he feel safe from? From God, perhaps? Can Coleridge really have been so bewildered and blasphemous as to suppose that the Almighty did not know what was in his heart, or was perhaps not as well read in German literature as he?

How sad that Coleridge should be so ill served by those whose extravagant claims and passionate refusal to face facts obscure his real achievements. It is not enough that he was a great artist in poetry and prose, and immensely important to

literary history as a critic and mediator of ideas? And how revealing that some of his defenders will not even break ranks to protest an assault upon his piety, not to mention the insult to his intelligence, affronts that must not be allowed to pass unrebuked.

NORMAN FRUMAN.
California State University, Los Angeles, California 90032.

'Bibliography of British History'

Sir,—Brian Harrison in his excellent review of H. J. Hanham's *Bibliography of British History: 1851-1914* (February 11) does not mention in the title or elsewhere that the book was prepared under joint sponsorship and direction of the Royal Historical Society and the American Historical Association. It is part of a series whose origins go back as far as 1909 when both societies appointed committees to cooperate in a project to continue from Schelling but from Kant, in so far as the two-volume edition in the *Collected Coleridge*, which will be standard for generations, ignores Joseph Warren Beach's identification of STC's verbatim translations, and Rens Wellek's detailed account of the debts in his classic *Kant in England*. The names of these two great scholars, whose work has been so distressing to some Coleridgeans, are strangely absent also in the otherwise almost unprecedently voluminous annotations in the third volume of Coleridge's *Notebooks*, where their writings are of fundamental relevance. Informed and responsible reviewing ought long since to have called these and similar lacunae to the attention of the learned world.

VALERIE PEARL.
Royal Historical Society, University College London, Gower Street, W.C1.

The Staging of the Sex War

Sir,—After the favourable comments by John Kanyon on my section of Volume 5 of the *Revels History of Drama in English* in his review (January 28), I may seem ungracious in making a protest. My objection is to his saying "To a mere onlooker it seems that the admission of actresses to the stage in 1660 might have had something to do with the prevailing content of the most plays, but none of the contributors to his volume even discuss the fact". However, on page 172, I say:

Consequently, the introduction of actresses on the London stage changed the medium. When the dramatists contrived plays containing vivacious young women who engage in a duel of the sexes and the managers cast the parts with sprightly and attractive actresses . . . the nature of the drama was bound to change. The playwrights now indulge in presenting the spirited love-game, with the famous encounters of Don Juan and Harriet, Mirabel and Millicent, to follow in due course.

In fact, as I look at the above sentences now, they appear repetitious, so that it seems strange to be charged with not even discussing this topic.

ARTHUR H. SCOUTEN.
Department of English, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia 19174.

'A Sentimental Journey'

Sir,—My colleague Professor Ian Jack (Letters, February 4) must surely be right in noticing a clue that suggests the opening sentence of Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* (1768) to refer to wine at French meals.

A further question arises out of Sterne's technical virtuosity in beginning his second novel with dialogue: "Thou, order, said I, this matter better in France." Can anyone produce an earlier instance of any novel, English or Continental, that begins with dialogue? The mode is so common in the present century that it is easy to forget it was unusual in the nineteenth and almost unknown in

Scott never begin a novel in this way, any more than Defoe, Fielding or Smollett before them; and Maria Edgeworth does so only once, in *Patronage* (1814). Dickens, Thackeray and Trollope never attempt it, to my recollection, or George Eliot either; though Disraeli does in *Spirit* (1845) and *Lothair* (1870). If Sterne is indeed the first, then the beginning of *A Sentimental Journey* may have held for its first readers as wildly fractured an air as its ending.

A question still further removed: almost all the titles of eighteenth-century novels, to my observation, are based on the names of characters, like *Tom Jones* and *Tristram Shandy*, or on a descriptive phrase, like *A Sentimental Journey*. But Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* (1765) is the name of a building—a style that grows common after 1800, as in *Northanger Abbey*, *Woodstock*, *Bleak House*, *Howards End*. The question is even less earth-shaking than the first: but I suggest, and would suggest any European novel earlier than 1765 that employs such a title?

GEORGE WATSON.
St John's College, Cambridge.

Sir,—When Sterne so dramatically begins *A Sentimental Journey* with "They order . . . this matter better in France" without any specific explanation as to what "this matter" is, he is not leaving to the imagination of the individual reader a point which turns out to be of no importance for the story? It is exactly in Sterne's manner to make the point, and then to leave him waiting for an explanation in vain. The point is precisely that nothing specific is referred to about which the reader's curiosity, so skillfully aroused, can ever be satisfied, and Sterne is typically having a laugh at the reader's expense. Ian Jack's brilliantly ingenious explanation would have given Sterne great amusement (Letters, February 4).

If Sterne is here giving anything it is surely not matters of the heart or of sex or "the civilized use of wine", but that the Englishman who regarded anything French as *ipso facto* better than his English equivalent. I do not propose to labour a demonstration of the existence of occasional exaggerated Francophilia in the 1760s, but as a single example mention how Sterne's fellow countryman, William Mason, in this period repeatedly teased Lord Horcourt for this very trait.

BERNARD BARR.
York Minster Library, Dean's Park, York.

'Seven Victorian Architects'

Sir,—A volume with the title *Seven Victorian Architects*, edited by June Fawcett and with an introduction by Sir Nikolaus Pevsner, is about to be issued by Thames and Hudson. On the eve of publication, it was brought to our attention that the chapter by Nikolaus Pevsner, on Sir Edwin Lutyens, contained an erroneous reference. Pages 123 and 147 are being removed and will be replaced with corrected versions. But some copies, unfortunately, have already been distributed and cannot be recalled.

We write now to put on record that the statements in the uncorrected copies are without substance and that we withdraw them unreservedly. We apologise sincerely to the families of Sir Edwin and Mr. Detmar Blow to whom distress has been caused.

JANE FAWCETT.
RODERICK GRADIDGE.
NIKOLAUS PEVSNER.
The Victoria Society.
THOMAS NEUBATH.
Managing Director.
Thames and Hudson.
30-34 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3QP.

J. D. Bernal

Sir,—I have been asked by the trustees of the late Professor J. D. Bernal to collect material for the authorized biographical study, which Mr. Bernal, nor indeed for the claims made by the famous "Anastasia" claimant. Indeed, we have found no traces of any such fortune. If, as he implies, Mr. Vinogradoff has done so, I shall be delighted to hear about it.

(c) As for the "worthless little-tattle" and "self-deceptions" which Mr. Vinogradoff says we have col-

Paul Celan

Sir,—Henry Hellmann (February 18) seems to be incapable of reading or understanding English as he is of commenting on Celan's German. "Enclosed yard" is precisely how I rendered *Gehft*, in conjunction with *Zeit*. It is a Celan "welding" which can only be understood with reference to previous uses of *Zeit*, i.e. a space or yard enclosed in time or enclosing time.

Mr. Hellmann's remarks on *Wanderstunde* make no point whatever. In the opinion of Celan's present editors, this mysterious term points either to "antennae" or, as I suggested, to Moses's staff. Tannhäuser and minstrels would make a ludicrous touch.

Eva Bornemann's point (February 25) is well taken. I should have made it clear that *Sinn* is used in the sexual sense in *Wanderstunde*. The use of "etymology" was not strictly accurate.

GEORGE STEINER.
Faculté des lettres, Université de Genève, CH-1211 Genève 4, Switzerland.

'The File on the Tsar'

Sir,—You have just printed attacks on *The File on the Tsar* by Igor Vinogradoff and Harrison Salisbury (January 28). My co-author Tom Mangold and I remain open to criticism, but I must reply to the points of sheer inaccuracy which occur in both letters. First readers should know whilst Mr. Vinogradoff is the heir to a famous family name, he has no special claim to expertise on the Romanov affair. Mr. Salisbury is of course a Pulitzer Prize winning journalist of great reputation (he visited Ekaterinburg in 1959). I am sorry he has made this blunder because comment from him would ordinarily be welcome. His letter is particularly strange given that he read the book before publication, and is actually quoted on the American dust-jacket as saying: "A meticulous job of research . . . a damn readable and elegantly conversational book."

Mr. Salisbury's worst error is his reference to our quidding *Harry Kissinger* as "remarking". "That was a lot of crap", on being asked "about the Summers-Mangold materials". If Mr. Salisbury (and your readers) will turn to page 197 of our book they will see that *Harry* was referring to a complex of gifts which form the key-stone of our book. We too took a dim view of the papers the former Secretary of State dismissed so bluntly.

As for the files we do take seriously, the original dossier of Investigator Sokolov, Mr. Salisbury suggests we did not "find" them; and that scholars have known all along where they were. I suggest he asks any Romanov scholar, or the Curator of the Harvard Library (where the dossier reposes). Indeed the papers have been there for years, but only the librarians and the donor knew, and they did not realize the reader of what they had. One main reason they did not know involves Professor Richard Pipes who, as Mr. Salisbury says, deposited the documents in the library. Unfortunately, as Pipes has admitted, he failed to read any of the seven volumes of official testimony, and simply dumped them at the library after being requested by the donor to carry them there.

For reasons of space I shall be briefer about Mr. Vinogradoff's comments, which are as blinkered and as hysterical as his original review. To put the record straight:

(a) Research shows that greed for a Romanov "fortune" has not been the reason for doubts about the fate of the Romanovs, nor indeed for the claims made by the famous "Anastasia" claimant. Indeed, we have found no traces of any such fortune. If, as he implies, Mr. Vinogradoff has done so, I shall be delighted to hear about it.

(b) I would also be fascinated to see the "evidence of several Bolshevik Commissars" to which Mr. Vinogradoff refers. There has never been any evidence, only second-hand accounts—albeit dubious, all appearing many years later.

(c) As for the "worthless little-tattle" and "self-deceptions" which Mr. Vinogradoff says we have col-

lected, he really should do better than picking on specific sources like "French and American journalists lost in Siberia". First, Ekaterinburg is not in Siberia.

The journalists referred to are Carl Ackerman, senior correspondent of the *New York Times*, Herman Bernstein of the *New York Tribune*, and Commandant Joseph Lassie, a deputy in the French Parliament. Ackerman, who in later life became Dean of the Columbia School of Journalism, included amongst his sources the American military attaché, the American consul, and the British High Commissioner. He filed a series of major front-page stories, one headlined "Find No Proof of Execution of Tsar and Family". Bernstein interviewed the judge who collected most of the evidence and testimony in the Romanov case, and simply stated the facts of the case, the disappearance of the Romanovs, as saying: "I do not believe all the people, the Tsar, his family, and those with them, were shot there."

As for Lassie, he talked to all the senior people involved in Ekaterinburg in 1919, and reported grave doubts about the "massacre" version—both in Parliament and in articles for *Le Matin*.

One may disagree with these sources. We cannot dismiss them as worthless gossip-mongers.

Finally, may I mention alternate views of *The File on the Tsar*, which were excised from my last letter. In 1919, and reported grave doubts about the "massacre" version—both in Parliament and in articles for *Le Matin*.

ANTHONY SUMMERS.
Ardaraugh, Youghal, co. Cork, Eire.

'Artists and Writers in Revolt'

Sir,—Few who read John Dixon Hunt's contemptuous review of my book *Artists and Writers in Revolt: The Pre-Raphaelite Movement* (January 14) will realize that I use the terms "erudite" and "scholarship-minded" only in the reference in my bibliography to his own work on the subject, published nine years ago. My full description is "Y. B. S. Hunt, a scholar, concentrating on the writings and their influences in England and France. For the scholarship-minded." I am astonished that he apparently takes this as abusive criticism.

So far from dealing only with "trivialities" (by which I presume he means that my book deals with the lives as well as the work of the artists and writers), my book deliberately presents a wider view of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, including not only its art, poetry and criticism but also its place in society, and its political derivations and influences from Thomas More's *Utopia* through Carlyle's *Past and Present*, Ruskin's *Unto This Last* and Morris's *News from Nowhere* to Oscar Wilde's *The Soul of Man under Socialism*, Bernard Shaw and the whole of the Arts and Crafts movement. I have tried to show and analyse their points of contact as length. Yet Mr. Hunt claims I do not cover politics. He does not mention that the very small amount of my text deriving from book and television review is in the *London Journal*, *Tribune*.

Mr. Hunt himself certainly did not use a great deal of my material, which of course includes new research since his own book was published. Surely anyone truly interested in a subject should read more than one source, even if written also to interest that major section of society now so despised by some authors and reviewers, the general reading public?

AUDREY WILLIAMSON.
29 Turner House, Eranmas Street, London, SW1.

Winner lose all

By D. A. N. Jones

VIVIAN NICHOLSON AND STEPHEN SMITH:
Spend, Spend, Spend
215pp. Capo. £3.95.

This is the story of a young woman, the wife of a trainee miner, living in poverty, who suddenly won a fortune on the football pools and made a spectacular mess of her life, in public. Her earlier life was messy, too, impoverished and deprived—but not newsworthy, not a human interest story, too normal.

If the book were presented as fiction, one would feel free to pass judgment on the principal character and perhaps to congratulate the author. Very near, the way he brings in the young girl's resentment of charity—"I never liked hand-outs, never liked anything given me for nothing"—to contrast with her later ready acceptance of her big win. But it is presented as a factoid, an "as-told-to" story. Stephen Smith reports that he spent fifty hours interviewing Vivian Nicholson with a tape-recorder, and that this book is based on those interviews: a literary arrangement of unguarded scraps of talk freely offered by an indiscreet woman who needs a great deal of protection and has, since childhood, received almost none.

Three of her five husbands died. After the suicide of the fifth, a vicar told her how sorry he was to hear of her death and the many times she had attended at my funeral. And oh, God, on the Sunday morning there was a piece in the paper about it. The letters I got! We had the police watching the house. We were fearing for Keith's life.

The story was about a child Keith who had been taken away from his mother and put in a children's home. The *People* reporters felt that the child ought to have some of Keith's money. Keith died in a car accident.

Accounts of Vivian Nicholson's unhappy life have often been published.

The ways of a warden

By J. W. Burrow

WILLIAM HAYTER:
Spooners
A Biography
191pp. W. H. Allen. £4.95.

Some biographies are written despite a lack of source materials, others are begotten by some reproachful packet of accessible papers. Sir William Hayter's biography of William Spooner comes into both categories. If one asks what Spooner did to deserve a biography, Sir William (who does not, to judge by his disparaging remarks on the portraits of his and Spooner's predecessors, hold the view that all wardens of New College should get one) would probably not deny that Spooner's most relevant action was to leave behind him a fragmentary autobiography and some diaries. Not, for that matter, does he deny that his materials are, nevertheless, rather scanty, and that Spooner was not a master of self-revelation. His abilities were modest, his career uneventful; occasionally the resemblance to his fictional contemporary, the great wit, Charles Pooter, seems to be beyond the similarity of names. Their circumstances, however, were different; Cummings and Gowing became Fellows of New College.

Spooner was born in 1844, into a world of denaries and archdenaries. His father was a county court judge, but Spooner was the great-grandson of the great-grandson of William Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford, was his cousin, and he was related by marriage to two Archbishops of Canterbury, one of whom, Taft, was also his godfather. He was to spend all his working life in New College, and his New College men scriving in both armies. But, of course, appreciation of Sir William's book depends most of all on one's own response to the powerful evocation of late Victorian and pre-1914 Oxford, irrecoverable now as

lished, particularly in *The People* newspaper. This new account is the result of Stephen Smith meeting Vivian Nicholson while he was engaged in sociological research into the effects of large changes of income on people's lives.

When the big win came—to Keith Nicholson, Vivian's second husband—a man from Littlewoods' Pools said: "You've marked a couple of your coupon, Mr. Nicholson, but we wondered if you would like to give us a bit of publicity? . . . Just imagine yourselves, a young couple and kiddies in a council house . . . I really should advise you to give us a bit of publicity."

So the Nicholsons came up in London and found the railway platform crowded with reporters. They were down on us like a pack of wolves . . . I remember one of them saying: "What are you going to do with all this money?" And I said: "I'm going to spend, spend, spend." It was just an off-the-cuff sort of thing.

From then on, she was a celebrity, famous for being famous, who could always get money and attention by talking indiscreetly to writers. Rather like John Stonehouse, she became a willing victim of the press, craving writers' attention and complaining afterwards.

The *People* had discovered some terrible news about Keith, and they made life hell for me and my kids for a long time after. This reporter pulls up, there were about three of them in this car. We were really afraid because we thought they were bandits the way they jumped out of the car and ran towards us. And oh, God, on the Sunday morning there was a piece in the paper about it. The letters I got! We had the police watching the house. We were fearing for Keith's life.

The story was about a child Keith who had been taken away from his mother and put in a children's home. The *People* reporters felt that the child ought to have some of Keith's money. Keith died in a car accident.

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immediately, "the bank came in" and took away all his mail and papers. Then a tax inspector came to assess the widow's possessions and then the bank people returned—to tell her to "get the kids out of school. All this was before we had even buried Keith." She was in financial trouble now and began to write her story for *The People*.

Her third husband was "a real bad 'un" who beat her up. "Trust me to find them all." He too died in a car crash, after completing a prison sentence for a violent robbery. She decided to move to Malta, where she had met an attractive man, and the indiscreetly chatted about the project to some *People* reporters. A story was printed with headlines: "Viv Duffies The Pope" and "Viv Goes to Open a Strip Club in Malta". She was deported from Malta.

Back home, she married again, but was divorced after another bad year. Then came her fifth husband, Gary. He welcomed press attention. The editor of *The Sun* seems to have behaved like a gentleman. He told her: "We won't publish anything . . . I think you've had enough, Viv." After Gary's suicide, she was told by a psychiatrist that he had been psychopathic, with the mind of a child of eight. *The Sunday Mirror*, she says, offered £450 for her story: "they knew that I was hard up." Then, the men from *The People* came. "This is her last chance, we know she's hard up

—essays by R. George Thomas and Roland Mathias in the excellent special numbers of *Poetry Wales* devoted to Dylan Thomas and Lewis are noteworthy examples.

All this is witness to a desire to establish the unique features of Welsh urban and industrial development so that it may be distinguished from similar, but different, episodes outside Wales. Those who have looked through the daunting sociological jargon of Michael Hechter's *Internal Colonialism* (1975), have been given by an American (and must be grateful for) a comparison of English overlordship in and attitudes towards Wales, Scotland and Ireland that should have come from within the British Isles. Necessary though his bold conceptualization is, the weakness of the book lies in its treatment of history. It seeks simplicity where none exists, at least in the Welsh situation. History has never been a more required study for our writers, politicians and ordinary citizens.

The possibilities for Welsh historical study are now considerable, though the accomplishment, as yet, is patchy. Some books and some individual historians stand out like beacons shining into the murky myth of the Welsh past; a pioneering generation, with David Williams at its head, has had to clear away the lumber to expose the real values. Until 1960 there was, in the words of Glyn Williams, "no journal whose primary function it is to publish articles of a general nature on the history of Wales". As the first editor of *The Welsh History Review* he remedied this defect with a substantial corpus of first-rate scholarly articles on the subject.

It was his nemesis, too, that led to the establishment of the highly successful Social Science Research Council conflict history project which salvaged irreplaceable source material and tape-recorded individual historians standing like beacons in the darkness. Connected to these hopeful initiatives has been the foundation of a Welsh Labour History Society with an annual journal, *Llafur*, which straddles the line between labour and academic. Concern with the contemporary activities of Welsh society can be observed in the Marxist quarterly *Cyffwrdd*, run by the Welsh Communist Party but open to other contributors, though it sometimes has the feel of the platonic tracts of another century. Not so that occasional *Rebecca*, a muck-raking news-sheet which burst like a stink bomb in 1973 into the palsied world of Welsh Labour politics and local government. Its pungency was supplied by information the newspapers would not print, its success came from the gleam felt by those who had seen the Emperor's nudily yet dared not speak.

Welsh history and politics are, it seems, ready to shrug off the stuffy platitudes, heroic memorials and blinkered myths that have encumbered the intellect and the present.

But there is a long way to go before people can be "released into their own culture"—the history of Wales, for example, is taught in all four colleges of the University of Wales, but an undergraduate can read history (including British literature) without having done any Welsh history whatsoever (are there any English universities who would treat English history so cavalierly?).

In part this is symptomatic of the issues raised by the Americanization of Wales—on the one side is welcome in the great heritage of the Welsh language and the distant past, on the other, and it concerns work in both tongues, is the forging of an identity, and hence a future, that confident in its own powers of assimilation, welcomes cultural diversity. No one has suffered more from this enforced divide than Gwyn Thomas, lionized by the tabloid media for his wit and ignored for his cruel intelligence. In his early novels the deliberately shuffed into the circumscribing gait of a Deuchely, Ruyon, Parker or Thurber, because their observations on idiom and human absurdity, in its American guise, fitted so well the xenophobic, fluted as well the xenophobic, Wales of his early manhood. Now, predominantly a playwright, he is exploring, helped by the availability of the Sherman Theatre in Cardiff and other regional theatres and resident drama companies in Wales, the public projection of what has always been essentially an oral art. For a bicentennial year in which the craze of discovering "Welsh" achievement overseas reached new lows (how much Welsh blood was in how many of the bodies who signed the Declaration of Independence, sold the Statue of Liberty, shot Lincoln, killed Mae West and drew Donald Duck?), he wrote a play, *The Breakers*, which gave an extended commentary on human mobility in race and time, through greed and lust, from a "Wales" to an "America" and back again. It was worthy, in a sense unplayable, but the strong reaction it caused inside Wales revealed a curious distaste for the exploration of the unique aspects of Welshness as a metaphor for the human condition.

The growth of "American Wales", in the North East and the South, has given novelists, hitherto the weak sisters of the poets and short-story writers, the chance to provide that social probing which realism or all-encompassing proletarianism prevented. Where there was an urban consciousness with attendant subtleties of social gradation, novelists have appeared, so that the continuing spread of urbanization and the diversification of work-experience in Wales may prove fruitful soil. In 1959, in the last days of the magazine *Wales*, A. H. Richards, lamenting the "never-never land" he read about and did not recognize, asked:

Where, one wonders, are the stories about the ordinary, unpoetic, irreligious, non-chapel people that one sees now in their

sixties and seventies? Where in Anglo-Welsh fiction is the minor or steel-worship portrayed with any accuracy, or discipline or even the most haphazard observation? ... there seems to be a void not only where the working-class is concerned, but in middle-class novelist has emerged either ... the John O'Hares, the James Gould Cozzens, have not made their appearance ... but the same conflicts for power, the movements between classes, the almost prehistoric social conditions have existed and do exist in Wales. ... Where one might well ask further, can one get any true feeling of times past expressed crudely and succinctly in Anglo-Welsh literature?

He has given the best answer he could since then, to all those questions, but the last one, in his own novels and stories whose general locale is a special part of South Wales, a coalfield town (Pontypridd) which acts as a metropolis for the converging valleys. A. H. Richards possessed the helpful eye of a knowing outsider, just as A. L. Lewis, in different vein, was removed by circumstance (class, education and the War) from the environment that reared and claimed him.

But undoubtedly the major talent now writing in English about Wales, correct in his indignant rejection of the abolition of Anglo-Welsh, is Emyr Humphreys, who delicately structured novels together amount to an intricately powerful view of twentieth-century Wales. His historical sense is more acute than Richards' but, apart from daring forays, he has far left. South Wales out of his conscious. Younger talent seems thinner on the ground: Nor Dorry has depicted the anomie of young miners and John L. Hughes's recent novel *Rifles for the Cringing Ends* based, like his first, in Pontypridd, has been praised for its realism about the "rubbish people" among whom his unemotional hero strides. Later consideration may reveal this as closer to the old brutality (warmed up) in a more complex prose than the clear-eyed harshness which its romantic harshness lays claim to.

Paragon alone will not produce the novelists which the history of South Wales demands, but a concatenation of developments unprecedented in the life of the mind in Wales may yet conjure the missing ingredients for writing necessary for its realism about the Council in the face of years of neglect, an eager but critical audience, a mature historical tradition informing a national community of its real links rather than its fabrications, and, the full acceptance for its literature that Wales is in English as well as in Welsh. Then the process that turned Wales into a "historic" nation only by damaging large parts of her non-historic characteristics might have its most human essence evoked as fully as the social detail resurrected by serious contemporary Welsh historians that cries out against the nostalgia of coffee-table photograph books of boy miners.

The tentacles of outside control can cripple a minority culture; they also impose a totalitarian architecture that destroys all over the panache of superb Victorian and Edwardian buildings whose upper halves mock disdainfully the false floors of steel and glass below.

The railways and their eye-catching stations have mostly gone for motorway tubes of fluorescent brightness conveying the commuters of the hills to the new centres of work and population on the coast; and for the convenience of the motor-car, white-tiled subways burrow their sterile way into the Clockwork Orange pedestrian precincts. And, as a consequence, the unemployed, legion of despair, and the wit of student graffiti artists, possessing only their self-given identities, Plie, Twot and Pan from Treafod, Chappie and Geraint from Aberbeeg, the Aberaman Boot Boys Rule OK—defiantly asserting their fractured selves against obliterating institutionalism.

Harsh winds from outside blow here, regardless of the pastoral which fondly preserved by those who, despite of the twentieth century, the particular life past and present of the Wales that stayed home and became, nevertheless, modern—"American"—has never been more relevant in a world full of cultural colonies. It is time for Welsh writers, in whatever mode they work, to adapt for themselves what Auden declared was a poet's "hope" to be, like some valley cheese, local, but prized everywhere.

Snipe's Castle

*I can't say I remember you. The truth is
No one does. But in some not so distant
Age you were egregious. Snipe, picking
In seed corn secretly, timing a plot
Or two, grudging the time of day
To contrivemen longer billed and taxed than you
A lot.*

*Not easily defensible this ridge, I
can see that. But in that backward era
Presell would come up pat to a Little
England eye (why else a castle?)—so
Possible jackdaws up from off
Might back in of an evening like the courtesan
Near cove.*

*Entry is simple now. Cold-bowed sycamores
Are the roadside hedge and clumps of tall white
Bells in season edge the old black leaning
Trunks inside. Penetrate far enough
And a cowed outhouse shows, sorry
With brambles. The rest of the secret acre has gone
Break rough.*

*Someone else's bees quarter the tract lower down
Working the hives. Your tame montbretia,
Snipe, has knives out cunningly on the verge.
Bad times, you'd think, there's never been
Respect. But is that you I see, quiet
And speckled, grubbing a while longer in the dull
Dark rain?*

Roland Mathias

Nonconformist utopians

By Glyn Williams

GERAINT D. OWEN:

Crists in Chubut
A Chapter in the History of the
Welsh Colony in Patagonia
161pp. Swansea: Christopher
Davies. £3.25.

During the nineteenth century Wales contributed to the general flow of population from Europe to the New World. Although only 3,000 of the Welsh emigrants found their way to Argentine Patagonia, it is this particular venture which captured the imagination of Welsh people. One of the most prominent figures behind the venture described by Geraint Owen was Michael D. Jones, a professor of the settlement in Patagonia. Although he was writing during the middle of the nineteenth century, his understanding of the social, cultural and economic problems of Wales has in some respects a distinctly modern ring. He argued that economic change in Wales generated a structural inequality involving a cultural division of labour which denied Welshmen any social mobility within their own society. Educational and religious institutions emphasized the ethnic basis of this inequality, oppressing the Welsh people by denying them cultural expression.

This, together with the cultural constraints on "status employment", was held to be responsible for generating psychological patterns of deference which were associated with the absence of personal security. These attitudes and the tendency for the intellectually most gifted to migrate in search of "status employment", severely reduced what was referred to as "the pool of intellectual resources" and resulted in an absence of innovative, entrepreneurial activity.

Structural inequality was also held to be largely responsible for the limited economic growth within Wales. Controlling interests in Wales determined that growth focused upon extractive rather than processing industries and meant that economic change in Wales went pace with the demographic growth. The resultant emigration was directed mainly towards the United States, where Michael D. Jones had spent several years. As a result of this experience he argued that the rapid acculturation of the Welsh immigrants involved the loss of their native tongue and an associated secularization.

This argument was widely voiced by Welsh leaders both in North America and in the homeland. The solution offered was to channel the emigrant to a utopian settlement organized on democratic socialist lines firmly rooted in Nonconformist ideology, with prominence being given to the Welsh language.

After several years of discussion and negotiation the settlement was established on the Chubut river in Patagonia in 1865 as one of Argentina's first frontier colonies.

Much of the argument for the Patagonian settlement had the grains of a nationalism which in many respects was anti-British. Yet the British Government became a party to the settlement in Buenos Aires. Argentine officials in Buenos Aires and the settlement's leaders used a number of influential spokesmen, including the representatives of the British Government in the Argentine capital. Thus the records of the Foreign and Colonial Office contain several hundred documents which refer to the settlement. In *Crists in Chubut*, Geraint Owen has drawn upon these sources in order to portray the growth of the settlement and to analyse the two relocation projects at the turn of the century.

From time to time considerable tension developed between the settlers and the Argentine authorities. At the turn of the century this tension focused upon two manifest issues, that of compulsory military training on the sabbath and that of formal education through the medium of the Welsh language. However, within the settlement these were merely symptomatic of general animosity centring on the control of resources. Argentine officials felt bitter about the Welsh settlers' hegemony over the commercial development of the Patagonian south and about the superior culture of the schools which taught through the medium of Welsh. These issues, together with a series of floods which engulfed the settlement in 1899, 1900 and 1902, severely disrupted the agricultural economy, generated a widespread dissatisfaction among the Welsh settlers, and led to the discussion of the possibility of relocating the entire settlement to Canada or to South Africa.

The main limitation of this study lies in its failure to consult the entire range of documents available. A reading of the Foreign and Colonial Office documents side by side with other documents pertaining to the same issues affords a number of interesting insights. One obvious facet is the ethnocentric and class bias of the British officials in their dealings with the Welsh settlement. Thus the account which rolls out of the British officials' reports is very much a one-sided version. It means that internal structural divisions which represented different interests go unacknowledged. Such an account also fails to take into account those who favoured the Canadian venture were by and large motivated by economic reasons, whereas those who considered relocation to South Africa tended to be swayed by issues of cultural assimilation. We have an account of an interesting chapter of the Welsh settlement in Patagonia, but one which could have been improved by more extensive and careful research.

Voices from the air-raid shelter

By Prys Morgan

Welsh speakers frequently feel like Mark Twain when he cabled home that reports of his death were an exaggeration. In fact, over two centuries since Thomas Gray's poem "The Bard" gave the world the impression that all our writers had been killed by order of Edward I (Edward the Bardicide, as one old Welsh writer called him). A few months ago in Eastern Europe before a radio discussion I was chatting with the young Magyar-speaking broadcaster who was to chair the programme; she had been brought up on the famous Hungarian poem of Janos Arany, which takes its theme from Gray. "How can you be a Welsh writer," she said, "you have all been slaughtered long ago by the English king."

An exaggeration, but the threat of extinction still remains for Welsh literature. One only has to look at a forthright and polemical survey of our plight recently written by Clive Betts, *Culture in Crisis*. His solution is to divide the country into three zones, English-speaking, half-English, and Welsh-speaking. His book is well informed and constructive and he is swinging in his attacks on other solutions to the crisis. It has also been a year of lively debate in Welsh. Emyr Llywelyn in his book *Adfer A'r Fydd* (Before the Cringing Ends), a moment for revitalizing the Welsh-speaking heartland, Adfer, has been savagely attacked by the religious historian R. Tudor Jones for preaching something like Nazism. And these are by no means the wildest solutions to our problems we have seen in print.

It has been one of the most productive years for decades in Welsh writing. Over three hundred titles came out in 1976, serving a potential reading public, if one counts those who might buy outside Wales itself, of no more than three quarters of a million at most. There are now a twelve hundred part-time writers in Wales, producing poems or articles or books fairly constantly, the great majority of them writing in Welsh. Of the three hundred titles some seventy were for children, and thirty were poetry, thirty novels, thirty biography and history, plus ten or twelve biographies and a dozen plays. A fair number of the titles are translations. The Welsh Arts Council invited Friedrich Dürrenmatt to come to Wales, and to coincide with his visit a number of Welsh translations of his works were published, such as his detective story *Das Versprechen* and his play *Der Besuch der Alten Dame*. I suppose that the average Welsh reader (assuming he could get hold of a copy) could read these in English, and this is true of some other recent translations of work by Glde, Anouilh, or

Chekhov. But I'm sure I would never, without a Welsh translation, have read the Dutch author Marga Minco or the Kirgizian Tchingiz Aitmatov.

In many parts of our lopsided country it is hard to find a bookshop, and books such as these could only be produced and marketed with the enormous amount of organization and co-operation between the Welsh Arts Council, and a unique body, the Welsh Books Council, which acts as clearing house for checking manuscripts, designing books and delivering them. It even forces a radio discussion I was chatting with the young Magyar-speaking broadcaster who was to chair the programme; she had been brought up on the famous Hungarian poem of Janos Arany, which takes its theme from Gray. "How can you be a Welsh writer," she said, "you have all been slaughtered long ago by the English king."

What sort of year has it been for Welsh prose writing? One significant change is that we have few if any of the witty, charming and often humorous books of country reminiscences which were so much in vogue fifteen years ago. The "backward look" is there, for example, in the highly self-conscious autobiography of the anthropologist and poet Iorwerth G. Peate, *Rhwng Dau Fyd* (Between Two Worlds), but it is much less prominent. Instead of a nostalgia for a recently lost past, I discern two contrasting tendencies in the writing of the younger generation: a vogue for historical novels and one for novels about a virtually rootless present.

Historical novels provide the romance of an aristocratic dimension missing from our democratic or one-class literature. This we find in Cyril Hughes's series on the life and loves of the Tudor heiress Catherine of Berain, and her husband the Antwerp merchant Sir Richard Clough. The contrasting genre, the story of contemporary

life in the raw, seems to display a recent fundamental change in our prose. Some of the great masters of the inter-war years are, of course, still alive, such as Saunders Lewis and Kate Roberts. Indeed, Kate Roberts, although in her mid-eighties, published a collection of stories, *Yr Wyllan Deg* (Fair Seagull) during the year. Their writing was rich and magnificent, conscious of old prose classics and yet true to the nature of their local dialects. But people no longer talk in the 1970s as they did in the 1920s, let alone the 1900s, and it seems to me that in the past ten years the younger writers have at last evolved a style very close to the abrupt, ragged, racy, vernacular colloquial talk of the present—authors such as Eiga Lewis Roberts, John Edwards, John Rowland, Dafydd Parri, John Edward Williams, Hazel Charles Edwards, Rhysdwen Williams and Marged Fritchard (the last named being the winner of the prose medal at the Cardigan Eisteddfod of 1976). Jane Edwards's lingo is base and mongrel in comparison with Kate Roberts's careful diction (she even records recent imports from colloquial English, though in her autobiography they appear as "fyfyn" and "blydi" and so on), but it has that unmistakable spark of vivacity. If only he could read the novels of his own Welsh-language contemporaries, John L. Hughes, author of the novel *Yr Ydychydig*, who recently lamented a lack of "gutsy" writing in Wales, would have no cause for complaint.

This change in the fabric of our prose is a sign of moving from a deep-rooted and homogeneous kind of society. Equally profound is the move towards secularism, with the ending of chapel or church-dominated society. Just as we find changes in the old rural society have caused movements like Adfer to appear, so the secularizing tendencies cause strong rearguard

religious movements. Some of the most imaginative and productive writers in Welsh recently have been some highly self-conscious neo-Catholics, writers like Bobi Jones, whose *Gwlad Lhm* (Image Country) appeared in 1976, most recent of a vast number of books he has written in the past fifteen years. One is made to feel the force of religious conviction in a large-scale study of the work of Kate Roberts by the young critic John Emyr, *Enaid Chyngus* (Wounded Soul) published in 1976.

In poetry as well as in prose Welsh writing seems to want to go in two opposing directions, and this produces paradox as well as tension. In general over the past twenty years it has seemed that Welsh poetry was approximating more and more to the European modern norm, the long reign of Victorian and Georgian lyricism seemed to be at an end, and the millennial reign of the old alliterative classical verse-forms seemed more and more confined to remote backwoods. During the past year a number of gifted and experienced poets of the modern movement such as Euros Bowen and Gwyn Thomas have produced volumes of verse. But one senses a change in the air, a yearning among the younger generation of poets for highly wrought craftsmanship, a longing for traditional alliterative and metrical forms. One of the year's most extraordinary literary events was the appearance of the newspaper *Baridias* (Bardistry). "Bard" means any poet or versifier in Welsh, not just in English, Shakespeare or Sir John Betjeman. *Baridias* is a tabloid journal for enthusiasts for Welsh classical verse. One banner headline runs "Should the rules be changed?" "A revolutionary cry, for the rules for the twenty-four measures of classical Welsh verse agreed upon at the Carmarthen Eisteddfod of 1450. Originally aristocratic, this kind of verse has gradually come down in the world, until by the twentieth century it was practised only by a few writers, mainly among the peasantry. In her book *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*, Rebecca West describes the astonishing survival of Byzantine designs in the embroidery of simple Macedonian peasants and says that even now they have been trodden down by the Turks for so many centuries, "they had never forgotten the idea of magnificence". The same is true of Welsh classical verse. A young writer who has mastered this difficult craft will not rest until he has written a number of volumes. One detects in the zest and enthusiasm of this movement a strong rearguard action against the bleakness and formlessness of modern styles.

The tense, yet somehow vibrant and alive, juxtaposition of old and new in Welsh culture was felt most acutely at the Cardigan Eisteddfod of 1976, the foremost and also the most popular cultural event of the year. This was the eight-hundredth anniversary of the first recorded Eisteddfod held at Cardigan Castle by the Lord Rhys in 1176, an occasion unique in any country's literature. It passed virtually unnoticed in the London papers. A more distressing Eisteddfod in the past was described by an English critic as "just a bunch of the drizzle", but this year the Druids in their robes could see and worship the terrible Sun shining on thousands of picnicking on a site which looked more like a swamp. Down on the beach, a crowd of people in their robes of awe of decorum and gravity, especially in the vast Druidic mounds, the superb set-pieces of the week, yet my general memory is rather one of endless conversation and laughter.

Very often, in the National Eisteddfod, it is the sideways glances, the sideways glances at the leasure at Cardigan of R. S. Thomas, in the essence of the poet's endless search for the ideal (published under the title of *Abercromby*). By contrast, it seemed to me that I had never seen such hardy-looking young people (I hope it was not my own impression), for at least the dignified Eisteddfod has been leitudinal enough to give room to the pop culture of contemporary youth, all the way from the folk of the sacred and secular, of highbrow and lowbrow, and while some are discussing the reform of medieval verse-forms, others no less intense, are discussing youths for the children of the twenty-first century.

The workaday culture of the Welsh also needs outlets, and the year in the press has been as odd and problematic as everything else. The famous odd radical newspaper founded in 1845, the *Baner* (Banner), has been on its last legs as a newspaper. But at the eleventh hour it is being turned into a weekly magazine for the treatment of news in depth, and, it is to be hoped, will fill a gap in Welsh reading. The new *Baner* will be much more literary and will be supported by a subsidy from the Welsh Arts Council. Yet how paradoxical it is that at the same time there are springing up in various corners of Wales small, cheaply produced local newspapers in Welsh, which seem to satisfy a craving among ordinary people, and which survive without a subsidy.

This paradox among Welsh language newspapers is only one of many observed in the past year or two, and I suppose it must be because our culture is in crisis. Clive Betts and others have underlined the gloomy statistics. Yet my impression of the year is one of great activity, resourcefulness and a comradely humour, as though we were in an air-raid shelter. It may be that our kind of civilization is changing or ending; it would not do for a musical nation to go out with a bang, but it will certainly not go out with a whimper.

CLIVE BETTS: *Culture in Crisis: The Future of the Welsh Language*. Ffynnon Press, PO Box 2, Upton, Merseyside, £3.
EMYR LLYWELYN: *Adfer A'r Fydd*. Gynwraig, 101pp. Pontypridd and Liverpool: Cyhoeddadau Modern Cymreig, £1.

DÜRENMATT: *Yr Aduried*. 151pp. Cardiff: Academi Gynwraig, £1.75 (paperback, £1).
GYNWRAID: *Yr Hen Foneddigaeth*. 110pp. University of Wales Press, Paperback, 70p.
HUGHES: *Yr Ydychydig*. 200pp. Denbigh: Gee, £3.
KATE ROBERTS: *Yr Wyllan Deg*. 100pp. Denbigh: Gee, £3 (paperback, £1).
BOBI JONES: *Gwlad Lhm*. 111pp. Swansea: Christopher Davies, £2.75.
JOHN EMYR: *Enaid Chyngus*. 256pp. Denbigh: Gee, £3.50.
R. S. THOMAS: *Abercromby*. 18pp. Court of the National Eisteddfod, 30p.

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The sacramental scene

By Nicolas Jacobs

ROLAND MATIAS (Editor):
David Jones
Eight Essays on his Work as Writer
and Artist
144pp. Llandysul, Dyfed: Gomer
Press. £3.95.

These essays represent, essentially, the papers delivered at a weekend school held in 1975 under the auspices of the English section of the Academi Gwyl. It is appropriate that the first such school should be concerned with the work of a poet who, though living almost all his life in England, drew more deeply on Welsh traditions than any other Anglo-Welsh writer, and whose work goes further than anyone else in proposing a resolution of the cultural tensions inseparable from the unequal relationship of the two nations.

The authors of the papers are Peter Orr, William Blissett, N. K. Sandars, David Blamires, Arthur Gledhill, Désirée Hirst and Jeremy Hooker. Of these, Mr Blamires has published a full-length study, *David Jones: Artist and Writer* (1971), though only the Canadian edition of 1972 is now in print and Mr Hooker a substantial essay, *David Jones: An Exploratory Study of the Writings* (1975), in which the others have made at least one published contribution of importance. These are independent essays, and it would be idle to look for an informing principle among them; nor, given the nature of their original audience, would it be unreasonable to expect vigorous argument of a kind to convince sceptics. None, perhaps, has quite the flair of René Hague's *David Jones* (1975). Nevertheless, many of the difficulties which are apt to baffie or even exasperate the reader unfamiliar with Jones's concerns and techniques are aired and to some degree resolved, and the collection deserves a wider readership than, in the nature of things, it is likely to find.

Many would dismiss Jones's concern with the past on social grounds as tedious or even as a social disaster that, on our downward spiral of economic, we are abandoning those identities and continuities for which he pleads, the case deserves to be argued in literary terms. But what aims at these essays bring out is how Jones's extraordinary sense of the past as giving life and sense to the present enables him to re-create a living continuity, whether by putting the speech-forms of the Flinders in the mouths of the Roman soldiers on guard at the Crucifixion or by depicting the Virgin of the Annunciation as a Welsh girl picking foxgloves in the Black Mountains. Everything, it seems, was sacred to David Jones, and everything in an ultimately Thomistic synthesis, made sense. Few readers may be able to share his conviction, which gives shape to the *Anathemata*, that the Mass is the point in which all sense converges, but many will share his thirst for wholeness, harmony and

a sense of coherence; the supra-rational ideologies of our time, from Marxism to environmentalism, articulate, in their several ways, the same need. In attempting, as Jeremy Hooker puts it, the "restoration of signifying power in the dominant signs of Western culture", David Jones attempts to satisfy that need in imaginative terms which, as they are not exclusive, so in the context of the human personality cannot be excluded.

The essays are not restricted to these difficult explorations of the debatable ground between literature and social psychology. Such matters, like Jones's frequently labyrinthine obscurity, remain problematic, but they need not render the writings the preserve of a small clique of exegotes. What David Jones has to say matters to all of us; unusually, this has to be demonstrated before criticism can be seen to be worth undertaking at all. Of the more conventional forms of inquiry in the book, W. F. Blissett's detailed investigation of profanity in *In Parenthesis* is perhaps the most scholarly, as well as being highly entertaining. David Blamires examines medieval literary allusions: Chaucer is the main source here (allusions to Malory are treated in Mr Blamires's book) with Dunbar and some of the lyrics in the first *Oxford Book of English Verse*. Only two are detected from *Piers Plowman*, though Jones's wide yet eclectic reading and the indirect

progression of *The Anathemata* are strangely Langlandian and might stimulate further research. Arthur Gledhill gives some much-needed explanation of some of the drawings and inscriptions, though without the originals before us we are only partly in a position to benefit from his instruction. An up-to-date version of Paul Hill's catalogue of works in public collections might well have accompanied this essay.

Perhaps the two most valuable pieces are those by Désirée Hirst and Jeremy Hooker; the former especially, despite some semantic confusion over the connection between femininity and creativity, hardly relieved by the Parnassian rigour of the support. We are shown Jones's love for the "holy diversities" and his fear of all-homologising uniformity as themes fundamental to the later poems, but also his fascination with the structures of power and authority and the means whereby, sometimes, their intentions are thwarted by their own processes. The tension between the two is at the heart of the present crisis in Anglo-Welsh relations; Mr Hooker, at the end of the essay, provides a necessary political gloss. Others, of a more acrimonious complexion, are even now being written at Westminster. The collection concludes with David Blamires's valuable bibliography down to 1975, supplementary in *David Jones: Artist and Writer*.

The court of King Coal

By Kenneth O. Morgan

M. J. DAUNTON:
Coal Metropolis: Cardiff, 1870-1914
260pp. Leicester University Press.
£12.

The explosive growth of Cardiff is one of the most dramatic features of British urban history in the later nineteenth century. From an obscure market town, it expanded with the South Wales coal industry to become the largest town in Wales, the metropolis for the export of steam coal, the coal capital of the world. If Coal was King in 1914, Cardiff was where he courted. A history of this fascinating town (elevated to city status in 1905) has long been needed. William Rees's short history, the work of a distinguished medievalist, was relatively little on the industrial era. Fewer less exist in the annals of the development of Cardiff than that of the port of Swansea or that of the unique industrial community, the working class "Samaritan" of Marthor Tydfil. Now the void has been admirably filled by M. J. Daunton, a native of the city, who has written his articles on the Welsh economy and other economic themes in the *Welsh History Review*, but who apparently conducted his researches from the alien, Anglican milieu of Canterbury. The result is impressive—a precise, fully documented, lucidly written and beautifully illustrated book which will be of great value and interest to historians, not only of South Wales but of the British urban experience generally. Welshmen may rejoice that our capital city, peering suspiciously at the colonized hinterland of the valleys beyond, has finally been given the academic attention it deserves.

The growth of Cardiff is considered from three perspectives. First, there is its economic development. Beginning in 1870, when the transition from market town to commercial metropolis was already complete, Mr Daunton traces the progress of Cardiff docks, their intimate relation to the Butte estate, and the establishment of a rival coal port at Barry. Cardiff's success was always due primarily to coal; exports of coal amounted to four-fifths of the entire trade of the port after 1875, since the manufacturing base of Cardiff was almost non-existent. Second, its social evolution as a city is analysed. The influence of landowners and developers upon the housing market, the relation of private builders and of voluntary associations to housing supply, the pattern of over-occupation (and the actual decline in working-class home ownership between 1884-1914); are

all fascinatingly brought out. In addition, we learn of the emergence of distinct residential communities and of class (and, in the case of the Adamsdown Irish, racial) segregation in the wake of transport technology and of changing income distribution. Long before 1914, the social distinctions between Plott and Buterwnn, between Rorth and Canton, and between all of them and the distant suburbs were already subtle and profound.

In his final section, Mr Daunton launches out boldly into the wider fields of social culture and politics. He analyses the merchants and the industrialists (not always with success) to dominate the social institutions, local government and civic life of Cardiff, a mercantile elite of talent and resource. There is also an interesting discussion of the political implications of this, in particular the gradual divergence between the essentially Liberal commercial and mercantile interests and the growing Labour movement. Cardiff is something of an oddity in Welsh politics, with unusually strong Conservative roots and a Labour movement slow to prosper because of its social diversity. Yet its involvement with traditional "old Liberal" Welsh politics remained powerful: Lloyd George's writ ran here, too. In Cardiff, the progressive alliance based on the civic morality of the church and wider sense of community, survived down to the war. Indeed, it was the coherence and adaptability of its mercantile Liberals that enabled Cardiff to thrive during its Edwardian years of glory.

In a few respects, this book is a shade austere, as an upgraded PhD often is. One would have welcomed some discussion of the Cardiff newspaper press. In particular, the peculiar relationship of the Tory *Western Mail* to the Anglo-Welsh culture of Cardiff deserves examination—after all, it flourished throughout the period while the Liberal *Cardiff Evening Post* subsided and finally perished. The quasi-American sectional and ethnic machine politics of the city could have been explored further; they cry out for their social anthropological novelist. And it is strange indeed to read of the history of Cardiff in these years with no mention of rugby football. One suspects that the defeat of the New Zealanders on that hallowed day in December 1905 (and the authenticity of Dr Teddy Morgan's famous cry) loom larger in the folk memories of Cardiffians than do the minutiae of social and economic growth. Nevertheless, this remains a most promising and worthwhile book by an able young scholar. May he now devote his skills and energy to the renewal of post-1914 Cardiff, so skillfully done the glories of Cardiff's high noon.

Getting things right

By Jeremy Hooker

DAVID JONES:
Letters to Vernon Watkins
Edited by Ruth Pryor
79pp. University of Wales Press.
£2.50.

Entering David Jones's writings at any point one is at once in an intricate and finely wrought labyrinth embodying his apprehension of universal order; every detail leads finally to the redemptive act of the Crucifixion. But to enter this labyrinth has amused him, therefore, he has included "for Mass" read "Mars" among the corrections and alterations which he thought Vernon Watkins might like "to get right" on his copy of "The Wall". The relationship between the redemptive act and the human capacity for destructiveness is symbolized by the god of war contains the fundamental tension which all the oppositions and interactions in his writings express, explore and seek to reconcile. But it would have been totally uncharacteristic for David Jones himself to comment on this point, or any other, in such large and general terms. After thanking Watkins for the references to his work in a radio talk in which Watkins had affirmed "a coherence of vision in all that David Jones touches" Jones went on to say: "It's difficult about one's own work, one likes some of it sometimes, a bit, but in general one has the feeling that one has not really made the grade—not by a long way." The characteristic humility, far from being inhibiting, is that of a man confident in his practice as an artist, but not in his reflections on himself as practitioner, confident in the importance of his art and his materia, but acutely aware of the difficulty of making any sign at all, a time when both the sacramental nature of signs and the particular signs alive for his imagination have been either generally denied or forgotten.

The letters—there are twenty-two in all, including one to Mrs Watkins—written between the spring of 1953 and the autumn of 1964, are not especially intimate in a personal sense, but provide numerous insights into Jones's careful attention both to the punctuation and typographical arrangement of his poems and his choice of words, some interesting remarks on T. S. Eliot, Dylan Thomas and R. S. Thomas and additions to our knowledge of what his Welshness meant to him. The subjects were almost of course, by the love of Wales and the dedication to an art which he shared with his correspondents, and there is relatively little here to indicate their affinities as communicative poets preoccupied with the relationship of the time to time; nor is there much to suggest their considerable dissimilarity in vision, technique and the use, which each put his Welshness to. The correspondence in its published form is, naturally, as a whole, useful, but from Ruth Pryor's foreword and the letters themselves, Watkins's kind, practical services to Jones—for example, his typing of "The Tule of a Place" and his friendly challenge to Jones to let the separation of "The Wall" from a mass of other poems value Jones doubted, and publication in the *Chicago Magazine*—may easily be perceived. Indeed, it is apparent that Watkins's encouragement, during a period when Jones was often in poor health, was an influence upon the shaping of his friend's great penultimate work, *The Sleeping Lord and other poems*.

One letter Jones calls "14 pages of a lot of tedious stuff apropos of this confounded Welsh-English thing". Far from being tedious, this is the outstanding letter of the collection, moving in its autobiographical passages and in the awareness it conveys of his being "an awful outsider" even to the Wales with which he had identified, and amusing in the dated colloquialism he used when writing most informally. Through its analysis of his particular Anglo-Welsh predicament the letter illuminates the situation not only of other Welsh writers who use English to mediate "the deep things of Wales", but of all who desire to enrich modern memory by using traditional signs, symbols and allusions in ways that are valid now.

Faced with the problem of how to make things signify which were luminous to him but obscure to many others, Jones encountered in an especially critical form the difficulty of recovering or creating a language of praise and celebration appropriate to the present. This is a difficulty shared by English poets in this century and David Jones triumphed over it. At the same time he analysed it in letters and essays. Not, of course, that he would have seen it in those terms. For him, as he wrote in Vernon Watkins of an enclosed correction, the point was "to try & get this thing right, or rightier".

Ruins

Long-ago sweat, long-ago straw,
Long-ago greedy eyes in the mist,
The old laughter of old voices,
An old woman in an old hay-yard
Scratching the fiery scab
Where blood gathers into a pool.

On the 25th of October
The mist of the mountain-top
Was a white apron
Tight about the loins of the faraway river-sources
And the shivers of the breezes caught
Those long gone times sweeping them back.

Today Pant y Maes is in ruins
At the end of a muddy cart-track,
Its roots disjointed
Though the granite is old.
There is no guide-book there to declare:
In such-and-such a place the old woman
Used to collect dock-leaves
To keep the yellow butter from running in a torrent
As she took it to fair in her wicker-basket.

Enough that here are ruins
Where life used to be electric
In living bodies.

The children bred in Pant y Maes
Even they are ruins
In soft feathered hats
On the streets of the black cities.

O, Wales! Why did you too not become
Part of eternity as the stars did?

T. Glynn Davies

On the side o' human nature

By Thomas Crawford

JAMES HOGG:
The Brownie of Bodsbeck
Edited by Douglas S. Mack
212pp. Scottish Academic Press. £4.
DOUGLAS GIFFORD:
James Hogg
239pp. Ramsay Head Press. £4.95.

Most students of fiction, soaked in the main tradition of the English and American novel, would agree with what James Hogg himself said in 1832 of his *Three Perils of Man*, after ten years of brainwashing from Scott and his followers: "Lord Preserve us! What a medley I made of it." When Douglas Gifford brought out an edition of Hogg's most ambitious work in 1972, it was barely noticed. Even a generation of readers brought up in the shadow of Northrop Frye was unable to recognize an original blend of romance and anatomy when they saw it; they just passed by on the other side.

The Brownie of Bodsbeck is really a much better introduction

Immortal sparks

By John Beer

CHARLES E. ROBINSON:
Shelley and Byron
The Snake and Eagle Wrought in Flight
219pp. Johns Hopkins University Press. £8.75.

Charles E. Robinson's topic is such a good one that one wonders why it has not been attempted previously on this kind of scale. Previous writers on the relationship, such as Isabel Clarke and John Buxton, have dwelt on purely strictly biographical aspects— which, while fascinating in their own right, throw little light on the poetry of the two men. This new study dwells on the intellectual and literary dialogue, involving the exchange of ideas, the discussion of common themes and their reactions to each other's poems.

When Shelley and Byron encountered one another in the summer of 1816 they spent long hours of discussion together. One influence was common to both. Shelley had been interested in himself in Coleridge's ideas (including those expressed in *The Friend*); Byron had recently been enjoying the company of the poet himself and had heard him recite poems, such as *Christabel* and *Kubla Khan*, which were not yet available in print. It may be argued, however, that Shelley's idealistic imagery and philosophy, therefore, the other by the exotic qualities of his impenetrable verse.

It is from his first contact with Shelley in this mood that Professor Robinson traces the notably idealistic turn of mind that Byron displays in Canto III of *Childe Harold*, written just afterwards, for Shelley to a point where the first excitement of contact with Shelley's ideas, he argues, Byron was turning back to the fatalism which was his more dominant mode.

In this sense the dialogue between the two men might be said to reproduce, in a higher key, that between Coleridge and Wordsworth a few years earlier. In each case a free play of mind, yearning towards the freedom of infinity, was met by a sensibility more conscious of human limitations. For Shelley, the "immortal spark" in man was essentially illuminating, offering a possible guarantee (if any were to be found) of his immortality. Byron, by contrast, concentrated on his fiercest, burning in ultimate impotence against the prison of cold fate in which he found himself enshrouded. So Professor Robinson finds it natural to apply to their dialogue a pair of emblems which they took to themselves: the eagle and the snake. It may be pointed out, however, that the emblem tradition and had previously been used by Blake and

Coleridge: the eagle for Byron, the snake for Shelley. Byron carries his emblem by virtue of his soaring energy, Shelley his by a mercurial restlessness coupled with a fatalism which he finds imaged in the snake's yearly sloughing of its skin.

A crucial document here is of course "Julian and Maddalo"—the poem by Shelley in which the relationship is explicitly projected. Maddalo, the Byron figure, rides out with Julian one evening at sunset and takes him out in his gondola to a point where the sun is blotted out by a prison-like building, rearing itself as an emblem of human mortality. One of its inmates is a Maialac, whom they go to see next day, and who turns out to be a victim of love.

The significance of the Maialac has been much discussed. He has been variously held to be a parody of Byron, or a reflection of Shelley himself. Professor Robinson holds that to be primarily a Byronic hero who was once a Shelleyan idealist—thus, as he says, effectively subsuming the experiences of both poets. This is persuasive, and it is to be welcomed that he interprets him a shade differently, as representing Shelley's recognition of a common ground between their positions. Both men, at least, could agree that the force which stood most firmly against realization of the ideal was that of unrequited love.

The dialogue is then pursued through *Prometheus Unbound* (seen as, among other things, a commentary on Byron's *Manfred*) to a time when Shelley, impressed by the fecundity of Byron in *Don Juan*, can say "I despair of rivaling Lord Byron, as well I may; and there is no other with whom it is worth contending." Professor Robinson reads a good deal into this "despair"—too much perhaps—but he seems right to argue that Shelley was consciously contending against his friend (a fact which throws light on his bent towards satire at the time). The two were also coming to differ more vehemently. Shelley disliked *Marino Faliero* and Byron *The Cenci*; but their differences about Keats, the imaginative achievement which impressed Shelley was seen by Byron as a "self-pollution"—at least until Shelley urged him to read *Hyperion*. In this context, Byron's appearance as mourner in *Adonais* can be seen as a tribute by Shelley to his own powers of persuasion.

So the dialogue continued, with Shelley refining his vision and Byron occasionally finding room for luminous moments amid the sardonic flow of *Don Juan*. Shelley was bowled over by *Cenci*, which he found itself enshrouded. So Professor Robinson finds it natural to apply to their dialogue a pair of emblems which they took to themselves: the eagle and the snake. It may be pointed out, however, that the emblem tradition and had previously been used by Blake and

The Brownie helps to confirm our first impressions of the moral stance of *The Confessions*. Hogg's subtle irony and coarse plebeian humour, deployed almost simultaneously (e.g. on the Laird's wedding night), undercut both Dalcassie and the Tom Jones figure of his son George, and it is because George allows his evil feelings to well up within him, insults Robert, and goes to brothels and taverns, that he makes it possible for Robert's curse to work. And the folk-devil of the last section, when Robert's entanglement in the weaver's web becomes a symbol of his spiritual state, reinforces our sympathy for the doomed man, which grows as we see him progressively lose control over his own identity.

One might have expected that the Tory Hogg would have had at least some sympathy for Claverhouse's historical position. But in *The Brownie* he and his troopers are utterly condemned, and it is the Cameronians, whose theology is similar to that criticized so mercilessly in *The Confessions*, who are the object of our pity. His point of view is much more militant than Burns's God's-eye survey: The solemn League and Covenant Now brings a smile, now brings a tear.

But sacred Freedom, too, was theirs; If thou'rt slave, indulge thy sneer. It is that of the folk's own traditions of class oppression. An example is Katherine's vividly realized shock and horror when her old servant Nanny Elshinder removes the muck which she has always worn over her face. "She saw that her ears were cut close to her skull, and a G. indented on her cheek with a hot iron, as deep as the jaw-bone." (Thus Mr Mack's text, where "G." stands for "Glasgow": the printed editions of 1818 and 1837 ran home the political point by making the brand "G.R." (Carroll's Rex?).) In the development of the story, this brief scene becomes for him an image illuminating the utter obscenity of political violence and the nobility of steadfast resistance to the might of the earth. For parallel epiphany, one has to go to the more savage of Isaac Babel's stories of the Russian Civil War.

In *The Brownie* value does not reside in the ideas of the Covenanters but in their human essence. Its ideological centre is made from three things—folk experience as conveyed by the magnificent Scots of David Laing's prayers and the songs and ballad snatches that are part of the very texture of Nanny Elshinder's thought-stream, Katherine's quietly insistent righteousness which yet has "fury" overtones, and her father's manly compassion. "Deil care what side they were on, Kate!" cried Walter, in the same vehement voice; "ye hae naen the side o'human nature; the suffering and the humble side, an' the side o' feeling." It is this same "side of human nature" to which Hogg is committed in *The Confessions*. Whether than the half-follower, not wholly of the Laird or the *hominie magen sensual* values of George, and which Mr Gifford states is derived from those elements in Scottish culture which began with Francis Hutcheson—the beginning of the previous century.

This observation does much to undermine the theoretical position from which Mr Gifford has written his critical study *James Hogg: the myth of a uniquely Scottish split between mind and heart* the same, somewhat different from all others, between mind and heart, which has now hardened into a dogma with about as much value in the interpretation of Scottish literature as the "Russian soul" has for the study of Russian poetry and prose. The line back from Hogg proceeds via Burns, and

for his patronizing snobbery, and Wilson's caricature of Hogg as a Shepherd of the *Noctes Ambrosianae* did him a disservice. But Hogg's failures—which were so often failures to stand up to the powers that be—were due not to his own personality. The trouble was that he was "no thinker", as Mr Gifford himself admits. The division in his life and work arose because he tried to take by storm a centre of commercial publishing and journalism by building on the creative habits of the old oral culture of the countryside. In his autobiographical memoir he clearly states that his ambition was to "push my fortune as a literary man". But the Ettrick of his youth was too isolated to provide the intellectual stimulus which lively Mauchline and Tarbolton gave to Burns. There were no farmer burles with whom to exchange poetical or prose epistles, no liberally minded lawyers and merchants, no simmering theological battles; there was no mixed local community to be the microcosm of a larger world. Poor Hogg had to move forward from a much more inadequate base. Instead of Burns's strong reasoning intellect, he had a chameleon gift of imitation that was the equivalent in writing of his public role-playing. His buffoonery in everyday conversation was exploited by irresponsible journalists, and a caricature-image for which Hogg himself was responsible became the basis of the Shepherd of the *Noctes*.

Yet one cannot help feeling that a peasant from the west of England, semi-literate to the age of eighteen, whose inspiration came from the traditional tales of the English peasantry, would have fared even worse in London: the English just did not respect folklore in the same way as the Scots. By implication Mr Gifford ascribes Hogg's failure to his "unconscious" as to where "his audience and... significant critics were to be found". But such limitations were not peculiar to Scotland. Where was Blake's audience? And who, in the era of De Quincey, Coleridge, Leigh Hunt, and Hazlitt, were Blake's significant critics?

Both these books are notable contributions to Scottish studies; Mr Mack's for its scrupulous editing and scholarly commentary. Mr Gifford's is a lively and readable account of a neglected author. He has some good things to say about Hogg's poems, and his chapter on *The Confessions* takes the debate on the nature of the work a stage further, though it is by no means the last word. He certainly improves on Louis Simpson's study of 1962. But this book is too brief, it needs to be followed up by studies on such topics as Hogg's poetry, Hogg and the Jacobite myth, and Hogg and the folk, before the next critical work from Hogg proceeds via Burns, and

Henry Mackenzie, as Mr Gifford notes: but it also includes Adam Ferguson and Adam Smith. Hume (Reason is, and ought only to be, the slave of the passions"), antiquarians like David Hurd and Lord Hailes and the Ruddimans—all of them luminaries of that polite culture which Mr Gifford so strangely claims had no influence on the best works of Ferguson and Burns. If the Enlightenment gave Hogg his moral stance in *The Confessions*, can its influence really have been so pernicious as Mr Gifford seems to imply?

Of course Scott is to be blamed for his patronizing snobbery, and Wilson's caricature of Hogg as a Shepherd of the *Noctes Ambrosianae* did him a disservice. But Hogg's failures—which were so often failures to stand up to the powers that be—were due not to his own personality. The trouble was that he was "no thinker", as Mr Gifford himself admits. The division in his life and work arose because he tried to take by storm a centre of commercial publishing and journalism by building on the creative habits of the old oral culture of the countryside. In his autobiographical memoir he clearly states that his ambition was to "push my fortune as a literary man". But the Ettrick of his youth was too isolated to provide the intellectual stimulus which lively Mauchline and Tarbolton gave to Burns. There were no farmer burles with whom to exchange poetical or prose epistles, no liberally minded lawyers and merchants, no simmering theological battles; there was no mixed local community to be the microcosm of a larger world. Poor Hogg had to move forward from a much more inadequate base. Instead of Burns's strong reasoning intellect, he had a chameleon gift of imitation that was the equivalent in writing of his public role-playing. His buffoonery in everyday conversation was exploited by irresponsible journalists, and a caricature-image for which Hogg himself was responsible became the basis of the Shepherd of the *Noctes*.

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مكتبة الأصيل

President of the Terrestrial Globe

By Alex de Jonge

VELIMIR KHELEBNIKOV:
Snake Train
Poetry and Prose
Edited by Garry Kern
338pp. Ann Arbor: Ardis. \$12.95.

For a short period in 1922, Nadezhda Mandelstam tells us, she and her husband gave Khelebnikov lunch. They had cautious and he was starving. He would always arrive on time, to sit rigid and withdrawn, moving his lips silently to the rhythm of the verse going through his head. He did not walk, he marched, scarcely flexing his knees. Mandelstam, his widow suspects, regarded him as a man of God. She goes on to point out that he was virtually driven out of Moscow by the Union of Writers, who declined to give him accommodation. He died wretchedly, in a small village where he collapsed on his way to Novgorod. Mrs. Mandelstam regards him as one of the first victims of official Soviet literature.

His martyrdom does not endear his work to her. She states emphatically that one lives either in the world of Mandelstam or that of Khelebnikov. No true lover of poetry can inhabit both; Mandelstam himself, to his wife's exasperation, had more regard for his work.

Yet one can see why the two poets are separated worlds, although the fact that they are so far apart should not prevent one from enjoying both. Khelebnikov's initial impact is that of an exuberant Futurist, making extravagant pronouncements, slapping public taste in the face, creating poetry which is not limited by the "unfortunate" fact that words tend to have meaning. True, Khelebnikov is most interested by the semantic associations of certain sounds or sound sequences. He considers that certain Slavonic roots have the power to generate whole series of forms which have particular related meanings. Yet this interest is less unusual than it sounds, and more sensible, too. On the one hand it simply formalizes the kind of meditation upon the textures of language which is part of any poet's business, on the other, it claims that Khelebnikov made, for particular relationships between sound and sense lack the po-faced precision of some of the French symbolists—e.g. René Ghil, and are often demonstrably arbitrary and playful, e.g. "Broom equals a nail of thought driven into the board of stupidity".

But what of the poetry itself? Some of it is reminiscent of the nonsense poetry of Christian Morgenstern or Max Jacob. Some of it is very ambitious indeed. There can be no stranger or longer exploration of the relationship between sound and sense, and intention than Khelebnikov's 408 (sic) lines of palindromic verse on the subject of Stenka Razin. Then there are the famous explorations of the patterns of word and potential word formations such as *Zakladnik Sneghom*, which, undeniably, work. Strangely the translations provide valuable pointers here. They are ingenious, convey something of the feel of the original, but are more variable in their shortcomings. Their inability to expand the phonetic and semantic textures of English to any comparable degree emphasizes the extraordinary success of Khelebnikov's original enterprise. *Zakladnik* in particular seems to be a tour de force of the various ways in which Russian word formation can take place.

Yet it is arguably in his longer poems that Khelebnikov is at his best. *Zhurav* is an apocalyptic vision of a Petersburg being taken apart by a large lion, that swings out of the sky. One suspects La Fontaine's fable of the frogs who longed for a king lies somewhere in the background (perhaps in the Kroylov version). Khelebnikov generally avoids writing about the capital, but it is strange to see how, as so often, a Russian writer is driven to some of his finest and most apocalyptic writing by the dead city. Running through the longer poems is an ethnic strain which does not always come off. At times in *Zemel' Poeticheskaya* and *Okope* and *Zhurav*, his images reduce the thrill one gets from folk poetry, and *Nach' v Okope* in particular includes a superb assimilation of aspects of the *Slovo o Polku Igorevskom* which may be. However there is also a terrible kind of ersatz paganism in the rhetoric. Khelebnikov frequently drops the names of Slavic gods; on the whole an unwarranted practice since they are mercifully few in number. This kind of allusion would be better used in a more logical kitch reminiscence of those awful Palekh box tops. It makes one understand perhaps why Nadezhda Mandelstam refers to Peter Verkhovensky as the first Futurist, with his pseudo-ethnic adoration of Starogin.

However, when Khelebnikov shakes off the flagrant mood and allows the folklore to be used in a deeper level—in his story of the old

Strictly between friends

By Richard Freeborn

WILLIAM MILLS TODD III:
The Familiar Letter as a Literary Genre in the Age of Pushkin
230pp. Princeton University Press. £10.50.

The description "familiar letter" may be unfamiliar. It translates the Russian *drucheskoye*, meaning "friendly", and William Mills Todd III has chosen to use the word *drucheskoye* (derived as he is careful to point out, from the Latin *familiaris*) to describe what are essentially "letters to friends" exchanged between members of "The Arzamas Society of Obscure People". He argues for the genre as a specific genre, and makes a case for its importance in the epistolary tradition of Europe and Russia, the role of Arzamas in the Russian tradition, the content of such letters, the means which their authors used for characterization and caricature, their literary criticism and the style and organization of the letters. The treatment is distinguished by noteworthy scholarship and a cultured, elegant manner, unmarked by any slighting familiarity or condescension towards its subject, which makes this study a welcome addition to the critical literature on the Age of Pushkin.

Inhibited by censorship, Russian writers were generally uninhibited in their private correspondence. Official perversion (the grandiose Russian *porukhivaniye* is meant by this), or the inspection of private correspondence by government censors, was always to be feared, but never as terribly in the last century as in this. On the whole, the editors of the book, Todd and his wife, have a prolific letter-writer and most writers were prolific correspondents. By contrast, the twentieth century may well seem uncannily silent in its witness to private family letters and intimacies. The telephone conversation is usually less for over. It is not that the art of letter-writing has been lost, but we simply do not ascribe the same importance to such an activity as did our nineteenth-century forebears.

Mr. Todd's book is a welcome addition to the study of Pushkin, and to the study of the letter as a literary genre. It is a welcome addition to the study of the letter as a literary genre. It is a welcome addition to the study of the letter as a literary genre.

In defining Zhukovsky primarily as a "balladnik", Mr. Katz upsets the more conventional view of him as above all a writer of highly individualized and polished lyrics. It was as a ballad-writer, however, that Zhukovsky's own name and sometimes attacked him. In 1816 his friend, the poet Batyushkov, wrote to him, "What a queer fish you are! You possess everything needed to achieve lasting fame based on important work. You have the imagination of Milton, the tenderness of Petrarch... and you write ballads. Leave the trifles to us. Take up something worthy of your talent. These very trifles, as Mr. Katz argues, none the less gave Zhukovsky the ideal form in which to externalize his passionate emotional nature, thereby raising the despised genre to the level of high art. Subjectivity is imported into what in its original form is a more objective and unemotional, revealing an extended examination of the changing character of the epithet. Conventional, unambiguous folk epithets—*krasnyi* (beautiful), *temnyi* (dark), *dobryi* (good), *miyl* (dear), *zloi* (evil)—give way to the coloured and subjective epithets of the *bludnyi* (naive), *mrachnyi* (dark), *zloy* (evil), *uzhnyi* (deserted), *odnichki* (lonely), *uzhnyi* (terrible). This

central thesis, supported in the book by appended charts, clearly goes beyond a localized relevance to the ballad, being pertinent to any study of literary evolution.

Romanticism via the ballad did not enter Russia unopposed, however. Conservative cliques attacked Zhukovsky and his friends with a mischievous vitality that found its apotheosis in 1815, in a play by A. A. Shakhovskoi, *Lesson for Coquettes*. Its protagonist, Fialdsk, tries to force an unhappy coquette to sit through a recitation of all forty-eight stanzas of his latest ballad in the "classical" style, a blatant parody of Zhukovsky's *Akhil* which the previous year, Zhukovsky himself was present at the first night. Although, regrettably, his reaction is unrecorded.

Perhaps the conservatives recognized what was at stake in the battle they were eventually to lose. For the victory of Zhukovsky and his greater disciples, Pushkin and Lermontov, meant a revolution in the language of poetry which lasted the century long, even when the gold of the early years had become tarnished, and readers were sighing in agreement with Belinsky in 1843 when he wrote that "the reading of marvelous ballads no longer produces any pleasure but... apathy and boredom".

as Mandelstam's process of refinement, but which worked none the less.

He also wrote some remarkable prose works such as the "sur-realist" *Ka* which ranges freely and often very beautifully from ancient Egypt to the present. He also wrote largely optimistic and ambitious treatises about the future, and was a President of the Terrestrial Globe. When he died in agony and far away from proper medical care in the village of Santalovo his last word was "yes". The words President of the Terrestrial Globe were written on his coffin, and it is said that one hopes it is true, that the peasants accorded him appropriate honours.

This collection consists of translations by a number of poets, some times accompanied by transcriptions and sometimes by Cyrillic text. By no means all the translations have Russian versions. There are some useful notes and an introduction by Edward J. Brown which is a little disappointing. It devotes too much space to demonstrating the "relevance" of Khelebnikov, not enough to exploring the work in depth. The translations of the poems are inevitably uneven, and the *zaim* pieces work relatively well. It is the poems employing popular idiom that come off worst. The prose translations are of a high quality. The anthology is on the best work, and has been well done. It is an ambitious enterprise and one which will give many readers of Russian and some readers of poetry a more than adequate introduction to his work.

But the spread of cryptography stimulated its contemporary cryptanalysis, that is the methodical application of techniques which poring decipherment without the key. In modern times this has become first mechanized and then computerized in ways well beyond the grasp of the average historian. But for simpler methods can yield effective and even impressive results. Thus in the nineteenth century a few dedicated full-time cryptanalysts made important contributions to the elucidation of the series of integers; hence the extinct species; and there is evidence that historians both in Europe and in America have now dug down in the archives to an increasingly valuable bedrock of documents in cipher.

So the answer to the problem of unvoiced ciphers still left in the archives is for research workers to acquire the relevant skills and to do it themselves. Uninstructed personal endeavour in this field must at best be disproportionate delay. A recent example is the cipher diary kept by Beatrice Potter between 1882 and 1897, left undisturbed until 1932 and not solved until 1958. Vignani and Lindner, although a competent cryptanalyst could have broken the system in about half an hour.

This article offers general advice on the compilation of the basic equipment which the historian will need should he set out to elucidate an enciphered document. It takes the form of a checklist, and encompasses the history and practice of cryptography. But it happens that one particular cipher-system, dominant in European diplomatic and military correspondence for several centuries, the reason for its dominance is itself instructive. In *The Advancement of Learning* Francis Bacon defined the main virtues of ciphers "whereby they are to be preferred" thus: "that they be not laborious to write and read" and "that they be impossible to decipher". But these aims were already antithetical; and it was precisely the fruitful tensions between convenience on the one hand and security on the other that gave rise to the development of the cipher throughout Europe from the sixteenth century onwards.

Ciphers operate by obscuring the most easily recognizable characteristics of the written word. Decipherment (i.e. decipherment without the key) relies on using those patterns of language which the encipherer has not destroyed to provide the foundation for a reconstruction of the plain text. Convenience of encipherment favours the method of substitution, in which each letter of the message loses its usual identity and is regularly replaced by another symbol. Classically the method may be simple and formulaic, e.g. for A write D, for B write E, and so on.

Cryptanalysis and historical research

By Eric Sams and Julian Moore

In 1641 John Wilkins, a young chaplain later to be Bishop of Chester and a founder of the Royal Society, published the first English textbook on cryptography, *Mercurius, or the Secret and Swift Messenger, showing how a Man may with Privacy and Speed communicate his Thoughts to a Friend at any Distance*. Most of his proposals were more ingenious than usable; but his book was timely. Within months of its publication the Civil War broke out and enciphered writing was used on a more extensive scale than ever before. Wherever the keys to these ciphers have been lost or mislaid, modern historical research may be frustrated.

Some fulfil progress has proved possible; for example, where a temporary decipherment yields a key which is also found to fit other texts in the same cipher which have not survived on *chiffre* (as with some of the letters of Queen Henrietta Maria published by M. Green in 1857). Similarly, a decipherment on *chiffre* may permit the decipherment of a whole correspondence, a possibility to which contemporaries themselves were alive. Thus when the Parliamentary forces captured the drafts of some Royalist cipher letters, they were soon able to publish the most discreditable passages from other such correspondence. There is now, however, little likelihood that the archives will yield similar windfalls for the modern researcher.

The practical alternative first adopted (for example in the diplomatic ciphers associated with the name of Sir Francis Walsingham) was to supplement the alphabet with a series of invented signs. Their further use in the nineteenth century, and variations were used by Poe, who employed a selection of printer's signs in *The Gold Bug*, and Conan Doyle, who adopted arbitrary patterns in *The Hound of the Baskin*. The use of the alphabet for the purpose of inventing and writing unfamiliar symbols soon rendered Walsingham's picturesque systems obsolete. The only set of equivalents that can provide sufficient variety and yet is familiar enough to be used by the encipherer is the series of integers; hence the dominance of number-ciphers.

These systems may be made as simple and formulaic as "Caesars" for the sake of convenience (e.g. E may be 30, 31 and 32), or else randomized for the sake of security (e.g. E may be 3, 29, 45, 61 and 89). In either case by the late sixteenth century it is usual to find a key-table for a one or two-figure number to represent single letters, while three-figure numbers stand for syllables, common words or proper names. This three-figure usage properly called *chiffre* (that cipher is often perceived in alpha-numeric order and is to that extent vulnerable to analysis).

The cipher component (i.e. replacement of letters by substitutes) is in principle entirely vulnerable, given a sufficient length of message. As a rule of thumb, the convenient minimum length may be calculated as twelve times the number of different symbols used; but texts where the ratio is much smaller will be accessible to the skilled analyst. Very few, if any, of these ciphers are, technically speaking, indecipherable—although insufficient material may render them so for practical purposes—and Poe's dictum applies to them: as it does not, to some modern systems. "It may well be said," he wrote, "that the art of ciphering is the art of the mind which human ingenuity may not, by proper application, resolve."

A wish to exercise such ingenuity is the prime qualification of the amateur cryptanalyst. All researchers have the powerful incentive of contributing to knowledge by being the first to solve a particular cipher, or the discovery of a significant discovery and personal satisfaction. Second (but only second) comes the right cast of mind. The latter was defined more than thirty years ago by psychologists as the "recruitment" to the British cryptographic service, which played so vital a part in the Second World War. The selection system was designed to identify general linguistic and problem-solving abilities, and to permit certain aptitudes for inter alia, mathematics, chess, crosswords, and orchestral score-reading.

All such skills can be acquired, in some degree. Cryptography is essentially a discipline, despite its literary and historical aspects. Its basic principles have been judiciously set out in elementary and advanced cipher manuals. There has been little systematic treatment of the number-cipher here discussed, though several sources (a list is appended) offer more pertinent commentary.

The first essential is to know the cipher's background and provenance. Here the researcher works at a clear advantage over the cryptanalyst because of his knowledge of the sources, including the prime clue of the probable subject-matter of the text in question. But he will need suppleness of mind to avoid the frustration of the *chiffre*. As the encipherer is more familiar with material from one source, the researcher will be able to recognize and employ to his own advantage the foibles of the encipherer—his preference for certain systems, say, or his penchant for protecting the beginning and end of his messages with many nulls, perhaps leaving the main body of the text comparatively vulnerable.

The next step is to identify the language used. This knowledge can offer unexpected insights. Thus a number-cipher in the hand of Abraham Cowley was used for work letters to Charles I, one from Baron Jernyn and the other from Henrietta Maria (the cipher was not one of those elucidated in the standard edition of her correspondence). The frequency and pattern of the numerals used in the two texts differed in such a way as to suggest that the same cipher-system, probably designed for use in English, was being used to convey messages in two different languages—English and French. One significant clue was the punctuation between several cipher numerals that could only have arisen from the need to encipher the letters Q and U. A French cipher system could be expected to disguise this common (in French) digraph; but in the English and the system available to Cowley accordingly did not provide any special camouflage. The tentative identification of these letters began the chain of reasoning that led to the recovery on *chiffre* of the French text, the mostly accessible English text, and to the discovery of a key which has been found to fit other unvoiced cipher correspondence of the period.

To identify such patterns and combinations is always essential to count and analyze the cipher-text, and to find the preliminary steps, in as much detail as possible. Index cards provide a serviceable method.

Take as an example of analysis a phrase from a letter of the exiled Charles II intercepted by agents of the Commonwealth and published in the papers of Thurlow, Cornwall's chief de cabinet (State Papers, Volume III, page 76): "Upon the whole matter let me hear from you 11.20.28.41.66.25.63.30.32.68.11.44.67. In such a manner as may at least give you some idea of the look for." Divide each index-card notionally into a grid suitable for entering the numbers used (10 x 10 for the two-figure cipher, with space for three-figure groups as necessary, is a suitable framework). On the card headed "20" write "20" and so on (using dots for repetitions) throughout the whole message. With increasing experience the practitioner can readily devise more complex and informative systems for intricate texts. The emerging patterns of frequency and juxtaposition, though no doubt obscured by the devices already described, are nevertheless likely to permit certain inferences—for example that two or more different numbers throw up patterns sufficiently analogous to suggest that they represent one and the same letter.

The card index system will suggest letter relationships which may then themselves be the subject of further close analysis, and the most unpromising-looking feature can in this way become the fulcrum for a solution of resistant material. At a crisis in his career, during a quarrel with Charles I, Prince Rupert wrote an often-quoted letter to his brother-in-law which is in cipher, to his trusted friend, William, the governor of the Royalist stronghold Oxford. Rupert seems to have been at pains to keep most of his

meaning secret and used his cipher system skillfully to break up the texture of his message to an exceptional degree. The systematic analysis of such letter relationships as repetitions and reversals has, however, recently led to the decipherment of the text.

The cipher manuals cited below will give many other examples of detailed analysis. As with Rupert's cipher, their general rules will need to be modified or supplemented (in ways far too detailed and varied to be set out here, even summarily) by experience and practice with the cryptography of a given country and period. In these circumstances the researcher is well placed to supplement analytical methods by inference from extant plain texts; for example, to try to find the "probable word" hidden beneath the cipher.

Thus the cipher letter from Henrietta Maria to Charles I referred to earlier was found to include her customary and touching salutation "mon cher coeur", which usefully confirmed some tentative identifications between cipher and plain text in all contexts the process of inference, hypothesis and test by cross-checking is crucial.

In the example from Thurlow's papers cited above, the reasoning (much simplified for the sake of brevity and cogency) might run thus: "Let the language be English. The look of the frequency count strongly suggests a formulaic cipher, with consecutive groups of numbers representing letters in alphabetical order. Most frequent are the early 30s; try the letters E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z. So G is probably a consonant. It seems plausible in itself and about the right distance down the alphabet. Then 63 and 66 might well be R and S; this would give S 25 R 2 E T E. So 25 looks like a vowel. D I S C R E T E. That yields 20 for '28', which assort well with 25 as C. Then 20 looks like A; and if 41 is I, then 44 suggests K (bearing in mind that in the English seventeenth century I and J are, like U and V, essentially interchangeable). Then the request must be for 'discrete key', making 167 = EY; so the three-figure groups are probably of the French text, the mostly accessible English text, and to the discovery of a key which has been found to fit other unvoiced cipher correspondence of the period.

In practice this process was reinforced and counter-checked at every stage by the substitution of proposed equivalents into the main body of cipher text, with encouraging results. So the request was in fact an indiscreet portrayal of the key actually used. That degree of naivety in cipher and encipherer alike, together with the failure of the interceptors to decipher the text, may suggest a certain lack of awareness of security and its techniques both in Charles II's court and in Thurlow's cabinet, and the study of historical cryptography might permissibly include analogous inference from the type and use of cipher-systems.

Similar analysis, and "probable word" formulae such as dates and

subscriptions, can also provide vital clues of entry into the unvoiced shorthand and cipher. For example, the shorthand used by William Clarke as secretary to Cromwell and his generals in Scotland has been declared by stenographic experts to be unreadable. But a cryptanalytic approach proved more fruitful: a frequency count and other analyses enabled some 300 equivalents to be identified, so that the whole system is now in principle readable wherever it is legible. It turns out to be similar to shorthand used by Pepys; Shelton's *Tachygraphia* (six editions were published between 1610 and 1641) was no doubt the common source book.

The disciplines of cryptanalysis can be taxing, and the tasks arduous, but the expenditure of time and effort is hardly greater than that required by the more cryptic of crosswords, and there is always the possible bonus of genuine and fruitful discovery. Such results are surely well within the competence of the average historical researcher, who already possesses the background knowledge and has only to acquire some relevant technique and dispel some irrelevant mystique. The only other needs are photocopied holographs (never transcriptions), plenty of cards and paper, sharp-edged pencils and wits, technical information or experience, reasonable confidence, plenty of patience, and a modicum of good fortune.

Selected sources:
J. Schooning: "Secrets in Cipher" in *The Pall Mall Magazine* (1896); contains historical background and useful facsimiles.
E. Bazeries: *Les Chiffres Secrets* (1901); has examples of Napoleonic number-cipher.
A. Meister: *Die Geheimschrift im Dienste der Päpstlichen Kurie* (1906) has examples of papal number-cipher.
H. Gaines: *Cryptanalysis* (1939), and the standard work on methods of cryptanalysis.
F. Pratt: *Secret and Urgent* (1939) offers a technique for deciphering multiple substitution (page 65).
L. Smith: *Cryptography* (1943), an excellent primer.
D. Underdown: *The Royalist Conspiracy* (1960) contains an appendix of Royalist letters during the Commonwealth, with examples of deciphering.
D. Kahn: *The Codebreakers* (1966); the best and most detailed bibliography is invaluable.
C. Carter: *The Western European Powers 1500-1700* (1971).
S. Richards: *Secret Writing in the Public Records, 1500-1700* (1974).
The solutions to the cipher letters of Henrietta Maria, etc. (SP 186, 10 f. unnumbered) and Prince Rupert (SP 16.51, 1.89) have been communicated by Eric Sams and Julian Moore respectively, with notes on method, to Dr. Ian Ray, King's College London (1976). Solutions to unvoiced cipher in Thurlow by Eric Sams have been filed in the Bodleian Library with Clerodown Manuscript 1073 and the solution to Clarke's shorthand by Eric Sams with the Clarke archives in Worcester College Library, Oxford (1974).

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Up from the deeps

By Nicholas Jose

DONALD HUGH MORRISON:
The Scarecrow
181pp. Heinemann. \$A7.95.

Ronald Hugh Morrison's *The Scarecrow* is a work of the first order. Its smalltown adventure story, set in New Zealand, is fully and freshly imagined, and told with roughness and great linguistic agility. Published first in 1963, the book has been generally neglected - conspiratorially some would claim.

An Indian family

By Susan Kennedy

IKMAL ATHAR:
The Years of their Lives
439pp. Macdonald and Jan's. £4.50.

All family sagas should begin with a wedding. In this case it is a traditional Muslim wedding in the country, with trumpets, caparisoned elephants, and strict rules of protocol governing the reception of guests at the railway station. Begam Yusuf, the bride's mother, fusses over the finer points of etiquette as the aunts and uncles, the distant cousins, have each to be found their appointed place. The guest of honour, the District Magistrate, is awaited, but this representative of the British Raj fails to arrive.

It is 1938, a year since the Congress Party agreed to cooperate with the British government. Makhdoon Hosain, a retired civil servant and head of the Lucknow-based family, knowing that his influence, and that

Only since the author's premature death in 1972 has interest been aroused, notably by the piece of Frank Sargeson and C. K. Stead. It was the first and strongest of three novels, and its release marks the beginning of much deserved wider recognition.

Morrison spent his life as a virtual recluse in a small New Zealand town and *The Scarecrow* is about a similarly self-contained community, isolated in time (the 1930s) as well as in place. The narrator is a pubescent boy who in the course of the tale comes to recognize and delight in his budding sexuality. The novel's world is suffused with Noddy Poindester's desire. He is intoxicated with nature, with the

larger-than-life characters of the town, and with the "private dickie" sense of mystery, derived from the Saturday-afternoon movies. His virtue as a narrator is that he can find explanations for the facts of the story without producing adult, rationalistic explanations of the forces behind the facts.

On the sometimes innocent, sometimes seely background of the town is grafted the melodramatic story of a sex-fiend on the run: the horrifying Scarecrow who becomes known as the Sansational when he enchants the townfolk with his magic tricks. In the novel's central image the Scarecrow indulges his necrophilia with a dead music teacher. Morrison presents this

to prison. But Percy Lal's plus and in failure: in 1942, after the arrest of Gandhi and Nehru, his attempt to instigate a local peasant rising, which will spread throughout India, is thwarted by Mohi, Moshara's younger brother, an army officer commanding the area, and by Rashid, another cousin, a junior magistrate. Percy Lal himself is killed. From then on the emphasis of the novel shifts to concern itself with Mohi's wartime experiences in Calcutta and at the front against the Japanese. His death finalizes the waste of those years of struggle.

An opaque and diffuse narrative style does not ease the development of ideas. At times the writing seems to lack any forward movement, and the sequence of events is hard to follow - it is not always clear whether days or months have passed, and the reader has to fill in many gaps for himself. There are moments of excitement, and some episodes which linger in the mind - the author re-creates the atmosphere of wartime Delhi, the slant and the petty flickering of Calcutta to organize the revolution among the dock workers, and then

grotesque act with idiosyncratic delicacy as it is seen by a congenial idiot who must die for his knowledge. Thereafter the narrator's sister is in danger, unknown to Noddy, who is too busy with his own accelerating plot of chicken-chieving and petty vendettas. No one can conceive of the depravity at large until in the novel's climax the elemental and the everyday converge. The plot's extraordinary convergence reveals the author's genuine sense of the uncanny, but in summary this reduces to sensationalism. The opening sentence, which mimics *Treasure Island*, is an example: "The same week our fowls were stolen, Dupine Moran had her throat cut."

The novel's great achievement is a style capable of connecting, as if part of one nature, hugely different events. We really feel that the

boy's dreams about a cycling school girl are, in his words, "a distant cousin of the frenzy which has raged in some murderous fiend." The language comes sometimes from boys' fiction of the 1930s, by turns lyrical, slung and eccentric, always the *lingua franca* of local *dissima* that makes what is happening authentic. It is no surprise to learn that Morrison was a heavy drinker for the prose is often fired by an almost hallucinatory power of apprehension. In the style of Malcolm Lowry, pines by fragile become "prisoners of their own mother" the earth. The narrative advances in inspired juxtapositions. Sentimental grief for a murdered girl is deflected by a farcical funeral in which an old man's body is accidentally replaces hers.

The book's subject is the drama that possesses nature, in minute and in shockingly large ways. The macabre Scarecrow is a devil who at the end is consigned to the bottomless pit, "the red-hot infernal gully," by the vitality of the young. Scarecrow gives us dim access to this drama at the centre of things; his novel is like the poet at the town's heart.

There was a big puddle of water in the middle of Klynham's main street. . . It had nothing to do with rain, but owed its existence to subterranean forces. . . One night when the wide street was empty and the moon shone over a few dark clouds from west and the puddle gave to an evil face a setting of jewels and muddy mountains.

Thin Air (186pp. Hamish Hamilton. £3.75). William Marshall's fourth story about the Hong Kong police, is undoubtedly his best so far. It is the boys from the Victoria Police station - who are beginning to emerge as distinct personalities - have to cope with a criminal who sets up a number of air crashes in order to extort 100,000 dollars from the airport authorities. Good background and a well-handled plot make of this the author's occasional inability to distinguish between funny and facious.

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LIBRARIAN-IN-CHARGE

Applications are invited from qualified librarians with some practical experience for a short-term appointment (up to six months) in the Offshore Supplies Office headquarters in Glasgow. The post, which is on the Civil Service grade of Assistant Librarian, carries responsibility for library services to the Glasgow-based staff of OSO, who include scientists, engineers and other specialists. The scope of the library includes all aspects of the offshore oil and gas industry and information sources on the world market for offshore equipment and services. 12 hour five day week. Salary scale £2,708-£3,980, including a supplement of £312.20 per annum. Starting salary may be above the minimum. There is a possibility that the appointment could become permanent and pensionable.

For further details and an application form please write to or telephone Miss G. Kingdon, Department of Energy, Room 1541A, Thames House South, Millbank, London SW1P 4QJ. Tel: 01-211 4339. Closing date for receipt of completed application forms 26 March 1977.

OSO

Islington
Libraries

ASSISTANT BOROUGH LIBRARIAN

P.O.3 GRADE - Salary £5,841-£6,492 p.a.

(Inclusive of London Weighting)

Plus £312 p.a. Supplement

Applications are invited from Chartered Librarians with considerable experience of library administration. The duties of the post include the supervision of the Common Services Division which comprises five sections namely Administration, Stock editing and interloans, Book Purchasing and Processing, Cataloguing, and Extension Activities and Publications. Application forms are available from:- The Borough Librarian, Central Library, 2 Fieldway Crescent, London, NS 1PF (Tel: 01-608 3051) to whom they should be returned by 18th March, 1977.

Library Services Division

Senior Assistant

AP.3 or AP.4

(Salary range £3,357-£4,137 p.a. Inc. plus salary supplement of £312)

Due to internal promotion we are looking for a Chartered Librarian, preferably with hospital library or related experience for this vacancy which is second in charge within the Hospital and Domiciliary Services Section. The successful applicant will play a major role providing a bedside library service to Hackney hospitals, a delivery service to the homebound, library provision to residential homes, and a staffing backup to the Medical Library based at Hackney Hospital. A friendly sympathetic approach is essential. Commensurate salary dependent on experience. Applications from disabled persons will be considered.

Applications from Head of Borough Personnel Services, Town Hall, 15A, Telephone 01-405 8272 (24 hour answering service) quoting job reference no. T.768 returnable by 14 March, 1977.

Hackney where job satisfaction counts.

Islington
Libraries

ASSISTANT REFERENCE LIBRARIAN

(AP 4) Salary £3,801-£4,137 p.a.

(Inclusive of London Weighting) Plus £312 Supplement

Payment

Applications are invited from Chartered and experienced librarians for these two NEW POSTS:

Further particulars and application forms are available from The Borough Librarian, 2 Fieldway Crescent, London NS 1PF (Tel: 01-608 3051) to whom they should be returned by 18 March, 1977.

THE BRITISH LIBRARY

Research Assistants

to work in the following areas:

Bibliographic Services (4 posts)
... for cataloguing and indexing English language material. Candidates must be qualified librarians (preferably with a degree) with knowledge of Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, subject indexing systems and general classifications.

Manuscript (1 post)
... for arranging, describing and indexing post-medieval papers, and general research work. Candidates must have a degree with 1st or 2nd class honours (or equivalent or higher qualification), preferably in history or historical subject, and reading knowledge of Latin and at least one modern foreign European language.

Printed Books (3 posts)
... two for cataloguing and subject indexing new foreign language material, one for general professional duties. Candidates must have a library qualification. For the first two posts they must also have a degree which includes at least one of the following: German, Russian, or another Germanic or Slavonic language.

SALARY: as RA Grade 1 £4,030 to £5,230 or RA Grade 2 £2,925 to £4,305. Level of appointment and starting salary according to age, qualifications and experience. Non-contributory pension scheme.

For further details and an application form (to be returned by March 24 1977), write to Civil Service Commission, Alencon Link, Basingstoke, Hants RG21 1JB, or telephone Basingstoke (0256) 6551 (answering service operates outside office hours). Please quote ref G(4)382.

Oxford University Press

The Delegates of the Oxford University Press invite applications for the position of Academic Publisher, Mr. D. M. Davin, who has been in charge of the academic publications of the Press for many years, will reach retirement age in 1978. His successor will be responsible for scholarly books in all academic fields, will manage a considerable staff of editors, and publish, under the Clarendon Press imprint, some 300 new books a year.

This is an important appointment both within the Press and the University. It is in Oxford and will carry a five-figure salary and other benefits. Applications should be made by 15 April and addressed to The Secretary to the Delegates, Oxford University Press, Walton Street, Oxford OX2 6DP. They will be treated as confidential. It is hoped to reach a decision during June and the successful candidate will be expected to join the Press, as Academic Publisher Designate, before the end of 1977.

CORNWALL
County Library

SENIOR LIBRARIAN / SPECIAL SERVICES

£3,678-£4,407 p.a. (AP.4/5)

The holder of this post will be a Chartered Librarian who can demonstrate the motivation and enthusiasm to develop an increasingly important information service in addition to services to the disadvantaged. Applicants should have previous experience in these fields and motivated to work on their own initiative. Benefits include a casual user car allowance and therefore the ability to drive is essential.

TEAM LIBRARIAN: WEST AREA

£2,439-£3,594 p.a.

(Librarians Scale)

Applications are invited from Chartered and experienced librarians for these two NEW POSTS:

Further particulars and application forms are available from The Borough Librarian, 2 Fieldway Crescent, London NS 1PF (Tel: 01-608 3051) to whom they should be returned by 18 March, 1977.

BRIGHTON POLYTECHNIC

LEARNING RESOURCES

COURSE RESOURCES OFFICERS

£3,591-£5,805

Experienced Chartered Librarians require to develop print and non-print library resources and to operate services. Application particularly sought from those with qualifications in Library Studies, Educational Science and Graphic Design.

Details and application forms from Deputy Head of Administrative Services, Brighton Polytechnic, Moulsecoomb, Brighton, BN2 4UJ. Tel: 0273-88888. Closing date 18th March, 1977.

THE BANK FOR INTERNATIONAL SETTLEMENTS

An international institution in Basel, Switzerland

YOUNG QUALIFIED LIBRARIAN

for a vacancy in its library specialising in banking and monetary economics. The main duties involved are the production of an abstract bulletin of periodical articles, cataloguing and classification. There is also some reference and bibliographical work.

Good knowledge of German and French is essential for this post, and a knowledge of economics and experience in classifying by UDC will be an advantage. Candidates should be able to type. Good salary, first-class pension and welfare schemes and many other ancillary benefits. Own Score Centre.

Please write, enclosing curriculum vitae, copies of testimonials and recent photograph, to the Personnel Office, Bank for International Settlements, Postfach 282, 4002 Basel, Switzerland.

THE BIRMINGHAM SOUND ARCHIVE requires a Librarian (National Register) to assist in the collection, preservation and access to the archive. The post involves a wide variety of duties including the acquisition, processing and access to the archive. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the archive and will be expected to undertake a wide range of duties including the acquisition, processing and access to the archive. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the archive and will be expected to undertake a wide range of duties including the acquisition, processing and access to the archive.

Further details from the Librarian, Birmingham Sound Archive, 100, Colmore Row, Birmingham B3 2AB. Tel: 021-625 1100. Closing date 15th March 1977. Applications should be sent to the Librarian, Birmingham Sound Archive, 100, Colmore Row, Birmingham B3 2AB. Tel: 021-625 1100. Closing date 15th March 1977.

ST. THOMAS' HOSPITAL MEDICAL SCHOOL

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY MEDICINE

LIBRARIAN

For busy research and teaching work in the Department of Community Medicine, a Librarian is required to assist in the collection, preservation and access to the archive. The post involves a wide variety of duties including the acquisition, processing and access to the archive. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the archive and will be expected to undertake a wide range of duties including the acquisition, processing and access to the archive.

LIBRARIAN HATFIELD

£4,671-£4,977

(Including Weighting and Supplement)

Chartered Librarians are invited to apply for details from Alan White, Training and Personnel Officer, Hertfordshire Library Service, County Hall, Hertford, SG13 8EJ, telephone Hertford 54242, ext. 5487, within 14 days of the appearance of this advertisement.

ACDER REGIONAL COLLEGE

LECTURE LIBRARIAN

STUDIES

The appointment will be made on a full-time basis for a period of 12 months. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the library and will be expected to undertake a wide range of duties including the acquisition, processing and access to the archive.

LIBRARIANS

ST. PAUL'S COLLEGE CLEVELAND

Applications are invited from Chartered Librarians for the post of Assistant Librarian in the Library and Resource Centre.

Applications, giving full details of age, qualifications and experience, should be sent to the Head of the Library, St. Paul's College, Cleveland, from whom further details may be obtained.

ASSISTANT REFERENCE LIBRARIAN

(AP 4) Salary £3,801-£4,137 p.a.

(Inclusive of London Weighting) Plus £312 Supplement

Payment

Applications are invited from Chartered and experienced librarians for these two NEW POSTS:

Further particulars and application forms are available from The Borough Librarian, 2 Fieldway Crescent, London NS 1PF (Tel: 01-608 3051) to whom they should be returned by 18 March, 1977.

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LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH

SENIOR ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

(A.P.2 - £3,064 to £3,717 inclusive, plus £312 supplement)

One Senior Assistant is required to assist one of the Children's Librarians in the Children's Library, Hammersmith, London W8. The post involves a wide variety of duties including the acquisition, processing and access to the archive. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the archive and will be expected to undertake a wide range of duties including the acquisition, processing and access to the archive.

COURSE RESOURCES OFFICERS

£3,591-£5,805

Experienced Chartered Librarians require to develop print and non-print library resources and to operate services. Application particularly sought from those with qualifications in Library Studies, Educational Science and Graphic Design.

Details and application forms from Deputy Head of Administrative Services, Brighton Polytechnic, Moulsecoomb, Brighton, BN2 4UJ. Tel: 0273-88888. Closing date 18th March, 1977.

CIESTER COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

LIBRARIAN

Applications are invited from Chartered Librarians for the post of Librarian in the Library and Resource Centre.

Applications, giving full details of age, qualifications and experience, should be sent to the Head of the Library, Ciester College, from whom further details may be obtained.

YOUNG QUALIFIED LIBRARIAN

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Please write, enclosing curriculum vitae, copies of testimonials and recent photograph, to the Personnel Office, Bank for International Settlements, Postfach 282, 4002 Basel, Switzerland.

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Applications are invited for the post of Assistant Librarian in the Library and Resource Centre.

Applications, giving full details of age, qualifications and experience, should be sent to the Head of the Library, University of Birmingham, from whom further details may be obtained.

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ASSISTANT REFERENCE LIBRARIAN